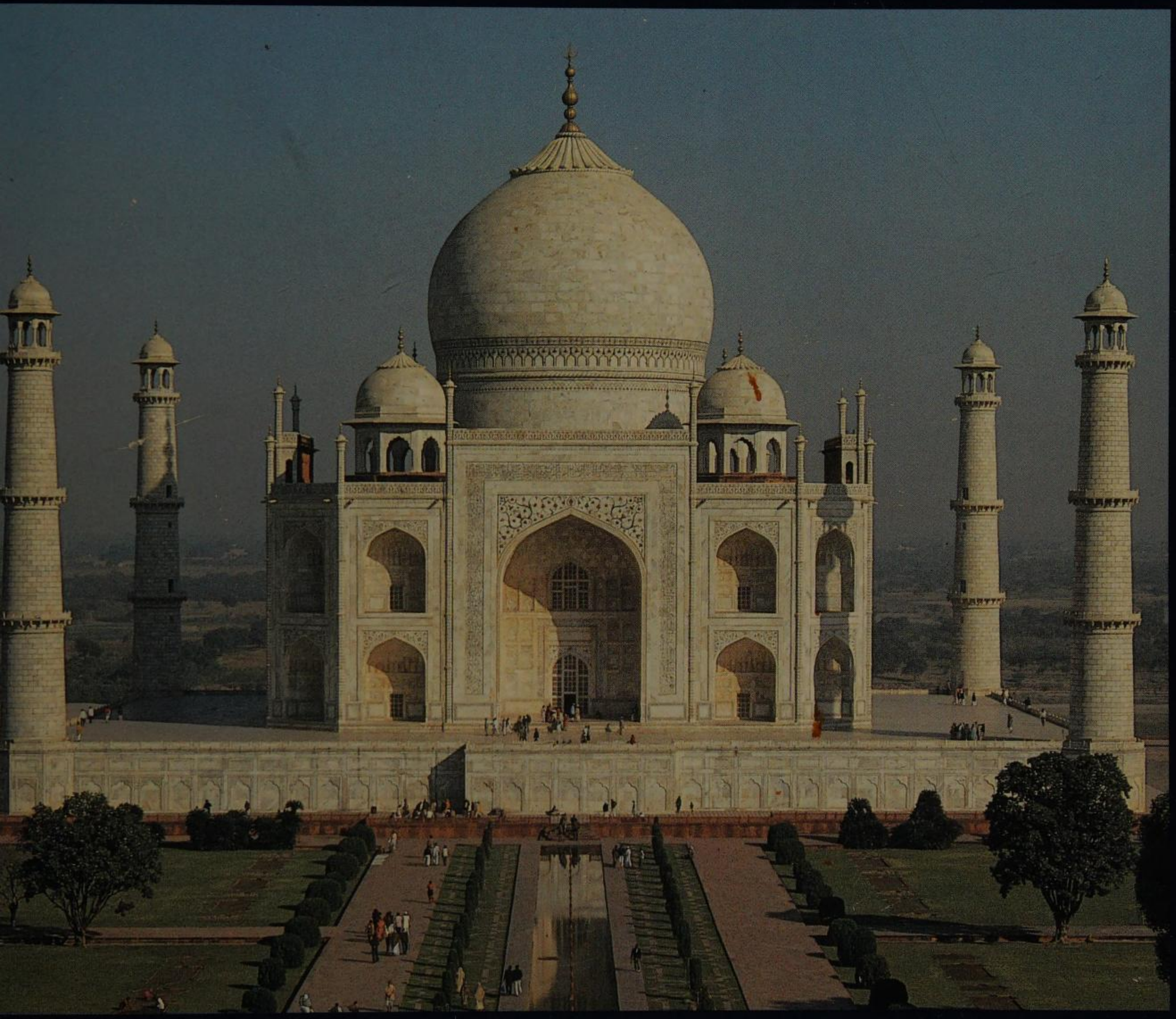
# TAJ MAHAL

## The Illumined Tomb

AN ANTHOLOGY OF SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY MUGHAL
AND EUROPEAN DOCUMENTARY SOURCES



W. E. BEGLEY

Z. A. DESAI

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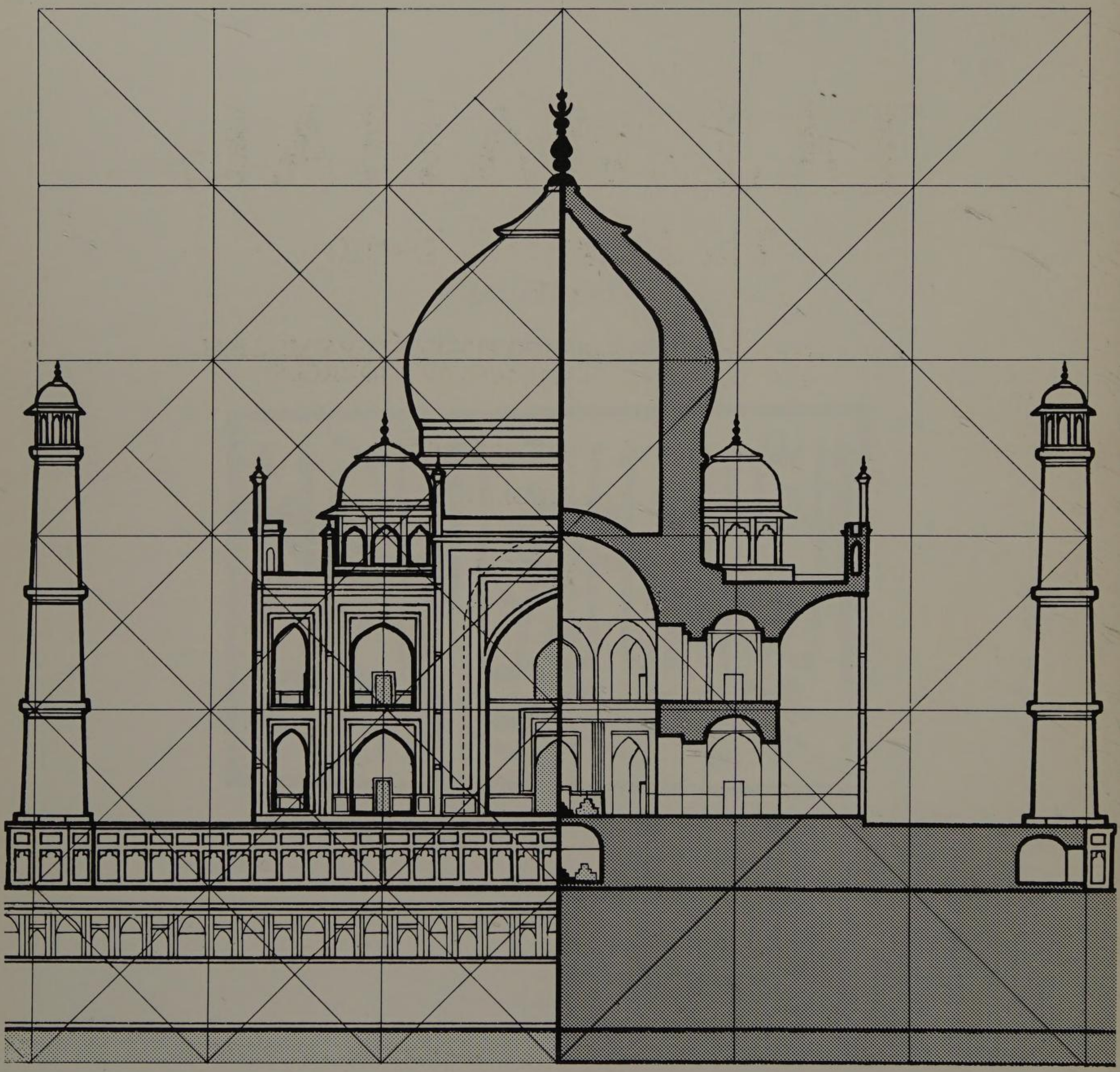
THE ILLUMINED TOMB



*Frontispiece*: Taj Mahal, reconstruction of elevation grid of north facade, based on Mughal measurements.

# TAJ MAHAL

## The Illumined Tomb

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AND EUROPEAN DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

Compiled and Translated by

W. E. BEGLEY

and

Z. A. DESAI

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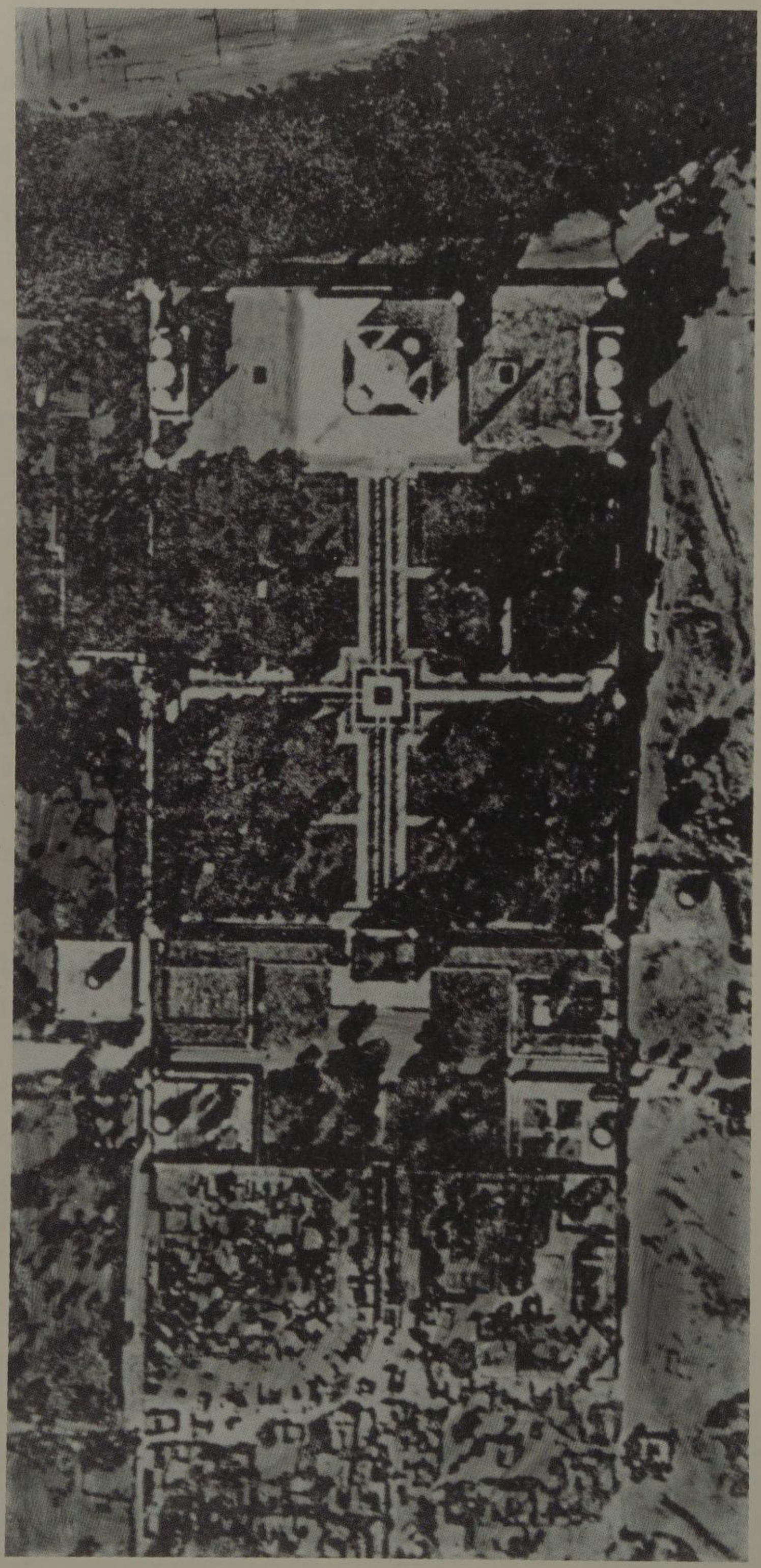

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M. A. CHAGHATAI

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The scope and method of this anthology of Mughal and European documentary sources are explained in the Introduction. Here I would like to acknowledge the kind assistance the authors have received from various research institutions and individual scholars, and also to say something about how the present compilation came to be prepared.

My research over the past fifteen years on the history of Shah Jahan has concentrated upon the development of imperial Mughal architecture, particularly on the important place occupied by the Taj Mahal within that development. During 1975-76, my continuing exploration of this topic was generously supported by a fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, which made it possible for me to study firsthand many important Persian historical manuscripts on the reign of Shah Jahan preserved in the British Library and the India Office Library in London, the Bodleian Library in Oxford, the Khuda Bakhsh Library in Patna, the Asiatic Society Library in Calcutta, and the Panjab University Library in Lahore.

Few of these manuscripts have been published, and none of the official court histories of Shah Jahan has ever been translated in its entirety into English or any other European language. In the course of my research, it occurred to me that a complete translation of all the original Mughal sources for the Taj Mahal might be of considerable benefit to other students of Shah Jahani architecture as well, particularly to those who do not have ready access to the Persian manuscripts and printed books.

In 1988, Professor Oleg Grabar, Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Art at Harvard University kindly arranged for the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to sponsor the project. To Mrs. Margaret Ševčenko, of the Aga Khan Program, I am grateful not only for her skillful editing of the manuscript for publication, but also for her enthusiastic support at several crucial stages in the evolution of the present book. Because very few sources had ever been translated, the project would not have been possible without the close collaboration of my friend and distinguished colleague, Dr. Z.A. Desai, retired Director of Epigraphy, the Archaeological Survey of India. During the summer of 1988, Dr. Desai and I consulted relevant Persian manuscripts and documents in the British Library and other archives. He subsequently prepared more than one hundred and fifty pages of preliminary drafts of the translations included in this anthology, which we have jointly edited. Many of the translations presented considerable difficulties, not only because of the convoluted syntax and flowery rhetoric favored by the Mughal authors, but also because of frequent lapses and errors in the Persian manuscripts and printed texts. Whatever scholarly merit these new translations possess is due entirely to Dr. Desai's expertise, but I must assume full responsibility for the final form of the translations, particularly for errors resulting from my labored attempts to achieve literate, if not always literal renderings.

Collaboration between Dr. Desai and myself was greatly facilitated by funding from the Aga Khan Program, and by travel grants awarded by the Smithsonian Institution

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Credits for the illustrations are given in a separate list. The great bulk of the original photographs reproduced here were specially prepared for my research in 1985 by the American Institute of Indian Studies Center for Art and Archaeology at Varanasi, by the Center's excellent photographer Mr. Nanda, with the permission of the then Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India. I am grateful to Dr.

P.R. Mehendiratta, Director of the American Institute of Indian Studies, and Mr. V.R. Nambiar, Associate Director of the Varanasi Center, for their support on many occasions during the past several years, in connection with my ongoing research on the Taj Mahal and other Mughal monuments. I would also like to express my gratitude for all the help and advice I have received from former Directors General and other officers of the Archaeological Survey over the past fifteen years, when I first began my research on the Taj Mahal. Regrettably, however, during the past few years, photographs of protected Mughal monuments and other requested materials have not been forthcoming from the Survey, a circumstance which has delayed publication of this and other studies.

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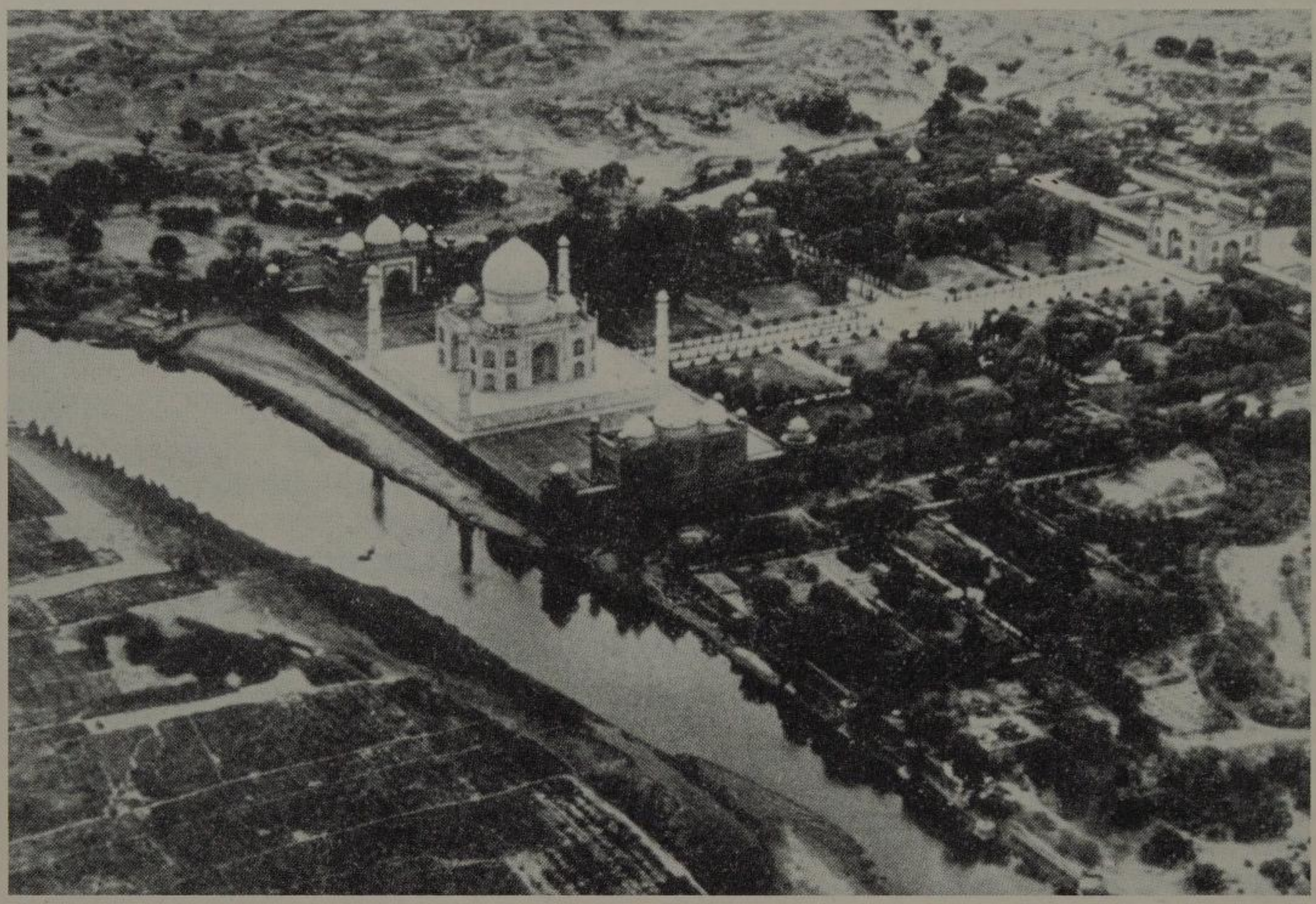
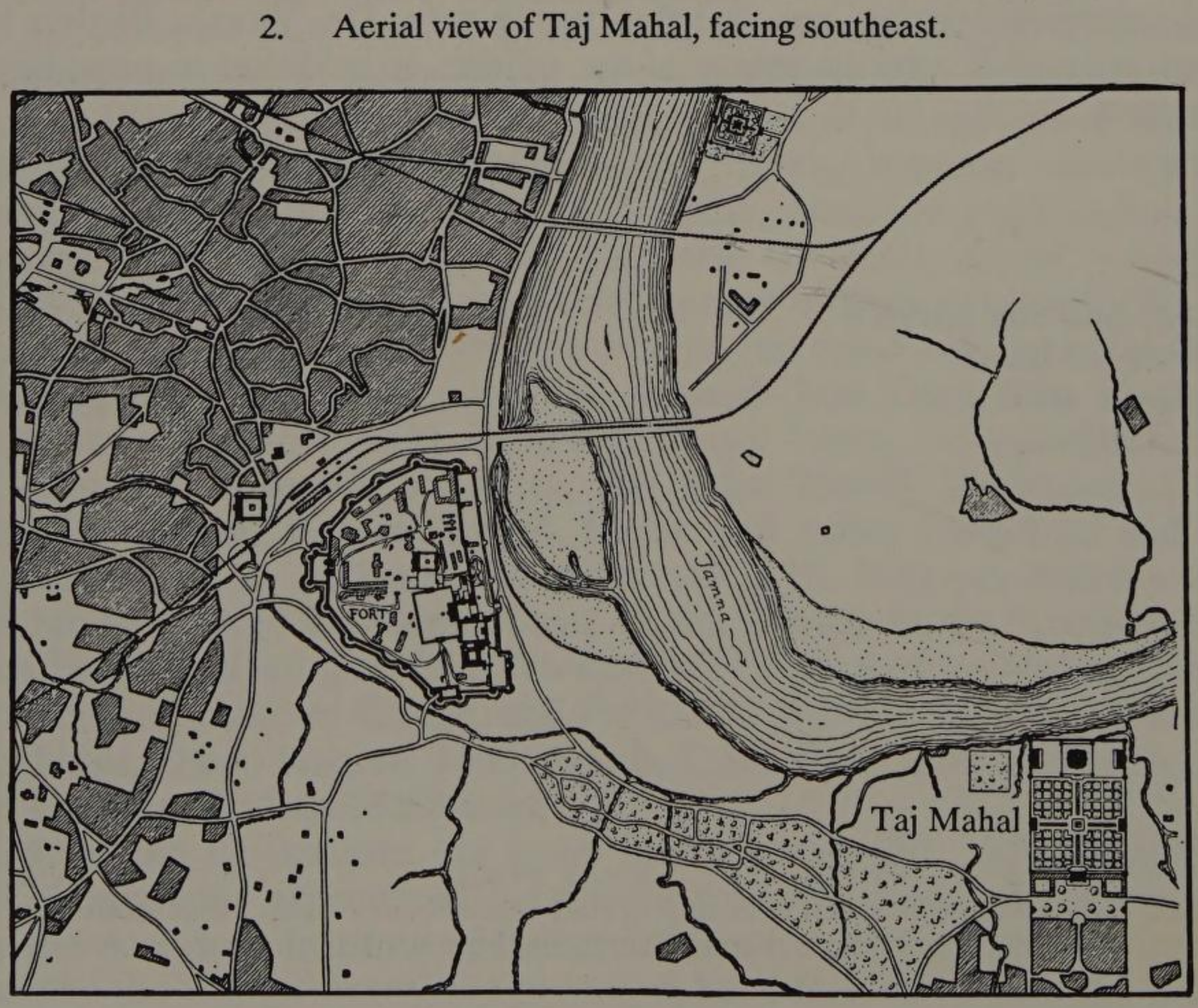


2. Aerial view of Taj Mahal, facing southeast.




3. Plan of Agra.

# INTRODUCTION

W. E. Begley

For more than thirty years, from 1628 to 1658, the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan (1592-1666), whose name is in fact a title meaning "King of the World," held absolute sway over a vast Indian empire stretching from Afghanistan to Assam and comprising a total area almost half the size of Europe--not quite the entire world, but in the seventeenth century a rather important part of it. European travelers of the period were awestruck by the opulent splendor of Shah Jahan's court and the majestic grandeur of his numerous architectural monuments, such as the new capital of Shahjahanabad and the famed Taj Mahal--built by the Emperor as a tomb for his wife Mumtaz Mahal following her death in 1631--which the French traveler Bernier felt "deserves much more to be numbered among the wonders of the world than the pyramids of Egypt."[1]

But despite its fame, the history and meaning of the Taj Mahal--which the Mughal sources refer to as the "Illumined Tomb" (*rauza-i-munavvara*)--remain obsure. Since the Persian manuscript and documentary sources have not been readily accessible, either to the public or to scholars, it has been difficult to understand the tomb in its proper historical and cultural perspective. Although earlier writers on the Taj have occasionally referred to these sources, no systematic study has so far been published.[2] The present anthology assembles for the first time all the known seventeenth-century documentary sources for the Taj, consisting of references in the Persian court histories and other literary works, including European travel accounts, Mughal official documents, and also the historical and Qur'anic inscriptions on the Taj Mahal itself. Until now only a very few of the seventeenth-century sources relevant to the Taj had ever been translated; most sources are in fact available only in unedited manuscripts that still await publication. Representing only a fraction of the vast amount of data that must once have existed, the dispersed sources assembled here shed important new light on the history of the tomb that many regard as the world's most beautiful building.

The documentary sources in the anthology are divided for convenience of reference into six parts. Part I contains new translations of all the relevant excerpts from the

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[1] Francois Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire, A.D. 1656-1668*, transl. by A. Constable (New Delhi, 1972), 299.

[2] The detailed descriptions of the Taj complex contained in the Persian histories were first fully published, with a few inacuracies, by M.A. Chaghatai, *The Description of the Taj Mahal of Agra* (Lahore, 1957; reprinted from *Iqbal*, 4, 1957). A brief account of some of the sources is contained in Z.A. Desai and H.K. Kaul, *Taj Museum* (Delhi, 1982). For references to R. Nath's problematic treatment of the Taj's documentary sources, see below, note 44.

Although the literature on the Taj Mahal is extensive, most serious studies have been published in the form of articles--which will be referred to at appropriate places below--rather than books. In fact, only four books are serious enough to merit mention here; in chronological order, these are: M. Moin-ud-Din, *The History of the Taj and the Buildings in its Vicinity* (Agra, 1905); M. A. Chaghatai, *Le Tadj Mahal d'Agra* (Brussels, 1937), and its Urdu version, *Taj Mahal* (Lahore, 1963), which remains the best work to date; Dietrich Brandenburg, *Der Taj Mahal in Agra* (Berlin, 1969); and R. Nath, *The Immortal Taj Mahal, The Evolution of the Tomb in Mughal Architecture* (Bombay, 1972).

works of the contemporary Mughal historians Tabataba'i, Qazwini, 'Abd al-Hamid Lahori, Muhammad Waris, Muhammad Salih, and others. Part II assembles the few surviving official documents relating to the Taj, including a copy of the royal *farman* issued to Raja Jai Singh awarding him property in exchange for the land at Agra which he had donated for construction of the tomb. Part III gives translations of the historical and Qur'anic inscriptions on the Taj, including a newly discovered signature of the calligrapher Amanat Khan. Parts IV and V assemble all the known data on the calligrapher, and the architect and supervisors of construction--including excerpts from the *Diwan-i-Muhandis*, which clearly point to Ustad Ahmad Lahori as the architect, although the court histories also state that Shah Jahan himself played an important role in shaping the design of his buildings. Finally, Part VI assembles a selection of relevant seventeenth-century European references to the Taj and Shah Jahan, which are found in the travel accounts of Mundy, Manrique, Bernier, Tavernier, Manucci, and others.

The anthology is limited to seventeenth-century sources and documents, but it should be noted that the term document is here extended to mean also the Taj's architectural features, which are here included in the form of an extensive photographic corpus--particularly of those features referred to in the literary sources. The primary aim of the anthology is to make all of the documents, both literary and visual, more accessible for study. In the following pages, an attempt will be made to put the implications of the various categories of documents into a broader perspective, but a detailed account of the history and meaning of the Taj Mahal lies outside the scope of this anthology, and will be undertaken in a future volume.[3]

## THE COURT HISTORIES OF SHAH JAHAN

The most important sources for the history of the Taj Mahal are contained in the various official court histories of his reign. For this anthology, only those passages that have some bearing on the history of the Illumined Tomb have been included. Most of the passages are narrative in nature, that is, they are concerned with describing important events at court--albeit in the florid literary style then in fashion in Mughal India for the writing of court histories. Short summaries of the significance of each historical excerpt may be found at the heading of each chapter; here the intention is provide an overview of the historical background of the histories themselves.

Long before his accession to the throne, Shah Jahan had become obsessed with his unique place in history. In furtherance of this obsession, the new Emperor ordered that all the important events of his reign, including the construction of the Illumined Tomb and his numerous other building, were to be set down in elaborate detail and subsequently incorporated in voluminous official chronicles composed in the florid literary style then in fashion--such as the incomplete histories of Mirza Jalala Tabataba'i and Muhammad Amina Qazwini, the three volumes of the *Padshah Nama*

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[3] For a discussion of the problem of the Taj's meaning, see the article by W.E. Begley, "The Myth of the Taj Mahal and a New Theory of its Symbolic Meaning," *The Art Bulletin*, 61 (1979), 7-37; the statement that "a serious reassessment of this important monument is long overdue" still holds true, but the present anthology is intended as a first step in that direction.

of 'Abd al-Hamid Lahori and Muhammad Waris, and its abridgement by 'Inayat Khan.[4] Though obscured by their overwrought language and hyperbolic praise of Shah Jahan, the chronicles still manage to unfold an amazingly rich panorama of the reign, from momentous battles and weighty affairs of state, to minute details of imperial architectural projects and innumerable royal audiences at which the Emperor received the homage of the assembled nobles and grandees of his realm, as well as foreign ambassadors and travelers from all over the world--all in accordance with a strict court etiquette as intricate as that prescribed later in the century by France's "Sun King" Louis XIV (1638-1715). As the official record of the reign, they present exactly the image that the Emperor desired to communicate of himself and the vast empire that he ruled.

Until now, however, only short extracts from the court chronicles have been published in translation, although scholars of Mughal history have of course utilized them in the preparation of their own studies of the period. In view of Shah Jahan's crucial place in the history of 17th-century India, it is surprising that his reign has been comparatively neglected, as scholars have preferred to concentrate instead on the reigns of his predecessors Akbar and Jahangir, and of his son and successor Aurangzeb.[5] In fact, there exists only one full-length scholarly study, Banarsi Prasad Saksena's *History of Shahjahan of Dihli*, first published in 1932.[6] Though exceedingly

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[4] For a fuller discussion of the court histories of Shah Jahan, see the introduction to W.E. Begley and Z.A. Desai, eds. *The Shah Jahan Nama of 'Inayat Khan* (Delhi, 1989). Of the four major Persian court histories of Shah Jahan, the incomplete *Padshah Namas* by Tabataba'i and Qazwini, like the third volume of the official *Padshah Nama* by Muhammad Waris, exist only in manuscript and have not been published; the two published histories are the account of the first two decades by 'Abd al-Hamid Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, edited by Kabiruddin and Abdur Rahim, two vols. (Calcutta, 1867-68); and Muhammad Salih Kambu, *'Amal-i-Salih, Shah Jahan Nama*, edited by G. Yazdani, 3 vols. (Calcutta 1923-46)--see also ed. by Waheed Quraishi, 3 vols. (Lahore, 1972); and Urdu transl. by N.H. Zaidi, 2 vols. (Lahore, 1972-74). For references to the various other histories of Shah Jahan, see: M.H. Hosain, "Contemporary Historians during the Reign of Shah Jahan," *Islamic Culture* 15 (1941): 64-79; also C.A. Storey, *Persian Literature, a Bio-Bibliographical Survey*, 2 vols. (London, 1970-71), Vol. 1, 564-81; D.N. Marshall, *Mughals in India, A Bibliographical Survey, Volume One; Manuscripts* (Bombay, 1967).

[5] Most of the major original sources for the reign of Akbar have been translated, including the official history by Abu'l-Fazl, *The Akbar Nama*, transl. by H. Beveridge, 3 vols. (Calcutta, 1907-39), and the *A'in-i-Akbari*, transl. by H. Blochmann and H.S. Jarrett, 3 vols. (Calcutta, 1877-96); Khwaja Nizam al-Din Ahmad, *The Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, transl. by B. De, 3 vols. (Calcutta, 1911-39); Al-Badaoni, *Muntakhabu-t-Tawarikh*, transl. by George S.A. Ranking, 3 vols. (Calcutta, 1898-99). For discussion of these and other sources, see: Harbans Mukhia, *Historians and Historiography during the Reign of Akbar* (Delhi, 1976); and Storey, Vol. 1, 540-56.

For Jahangir's reign, the major source is his memoirs, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, transl. by A. Rogers and H. Beveridge, 2 vols. (Calcutta, 1909-14). The history by Mu'tamad Khan, *Iqbal Nama-i-Jahangiri*, ed. by Abd al-Hayy and Ahmad Ali (Calcutta, 1865), has not yet been translated, nor has Khwaja Kamgar's *Ma'asir-i-Jahangiri*, ed. by Azra Alavi (Delhi, 1978). Full discussion of sources is given in Beni Prasad, *History of Jahangir* (Allahabad, 1940); Storey, Vol. 1, 556-64.

The densely written official history of the first decade of Aurangzeb's reign, Muhammad Kazim's *'Alamgir Nama*, ed. by Khadim Husain and Abd al-Hayy (Calcutta 1865-73), is also not available in translation, but see; 'Aqil Khan, *The Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri*, transl. by Zafar Hasan (Delhi, 1946); Musta'id Khan, *Ma'asir-i-'Alamgiri*, transl. by J.N. Sarkar (Calcutta, 1947); Ishwardas Nagar, *Futuhat-i-'Alamgiri*, transl. by Tasneem Ahmad (Delhi, 1978); Khwafi Khan, transl. excerpts in Anees Jahan Syed, *Aurangzeb in Muntakhab al-Lubab* (Bombay, 1977). For full discussion of these and other sources, see the monumental history by J.N. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb, Mainly Based on Persian Sources*, 5 vols. (Calcutta, 1912-30); Storey, Vol. 1, 582-99.

[6] Banarsi Prasad Saksena, *History of Shahjahan of Dihli* (Allahabad, 1932).

thorough in its utilization of all available sources, in the final analysis Saksena's book presents a fragmentary and somewhat disjointed account of Shah Jahan's reign. Most of the major political events are analyzed, and different points of view are advanced in addition to the official Mughal version; but missing is the sense of pageantry that was such an integral part of courtly life. In concentrating on the grand political design, Saksena overlooks the minutiae of the Emperor's daily routine and elaborate court ceremonials like the annual *Nauroz* festivals, the weighings against gold on the occasions of royal birthdays according to both the solar and the lunar calendars, and the great public displays at the time of the marriages of the noble princes--all of which must be taken into consideration in order to achieve a balanced picture of the complex personality of Shah Jahan and the character of his reign.[7]

This is not to say that the court chronicles are complete in their coverage either. The image they present of Shah Jahan is entirely externalized--the literary equivalent of the rigidly formal portraits which were executed with fastidious detail by painters in the imperial atelier, and designed for inclusion in elegantly calligraphed royal manuscripts of the completed court chronicles. With rare exceptions, the authors of the Persian histories avoided direct references to the private life of the Emperor, nor did they choose to delve too deeply into the true motivations behind even his most public actions. In any event, we know that the drafts of each chapter of the histories had to be approved by the Emperor himself or one of his specially designated agents.

*The Background of the Court Chronicles*

The immediate precedent for the detailed chronicles of Shah Jahan was the mammoth *Akbar Nama* composed by the learned Persian scholar and high court official Abu'l-Fazl, which provides an exhaustive coverage of more than forty years of the reign of Shah Jahan's grandfather, the great Emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605).[8] Having been raised at the court of his grandfather, Shah Jahan was deeply attached to Akbar, who died when the young prince was only thirteen years old. Babur, who had founded the Mughal empire in 1526, had written his own memoirs in Turkish, and his example was later followed by Shah Jahan's father Jahangir (r. 1605-27), who however wrote in Persian, since by that time the Mughals had gradually lost the facility to compose literary works in their hereditary language.[9]

Throughout his life, Shah Jahan strived in many ways to emulate his revered grandfather, indeed to surpass his outstanding achievements. This was especially true with regard to the construction of impressive architectural monuments, which became a virtual obsession with Shah Jahan, as he clearly recognized that these would constitute enduring memorials to his own greatness.

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[7] The coverage of Shah Jahan's reign in the standard general histories is far from adequate; see Richard Burn, ed., *The Cambridge History of India, Vol. IV, the Mughal Period* (Cambridge, 1922), where the chapter on Shah Jahan runs to less than 40 pages; and R.C. Majumdar, ed., *The History and Culture of the Indian People, The Mughal Empire* (Bombay, 1974), where the coverage is less than 25 pages. Since Saksena's detailed monograph runs to only about 350 printed pages, compared to about 2,700 pages for the three volumes of the *Padshah Nama*, it is evident that a thorough and comprehensive history of Shah Jahan has still to be written.

[8] Abu'l-Fazl, *The Akbar Nama*, transl. by H. Beveridge, 3. vols. (Calcutta, 1907-39).

[9] See A.S. Beveridge, transl., *Babur Nama, Memoirs of Babur* (London, 1921); *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, or Memoirs of Jahangir*, transl. by A. Rogers and H. Beveridge (Calcutta, 1911-39).

A similar motivation underlay Shah Jahan's commissioning of renowned prose writers to compose an appropriately grandiose history of his reign. Several different authors are known to have tried their hand before the Emperor finally made up his mind once and for all. Ultimately the source materials utilized by each of the rival authors were the same, namely the daily records of court transactions and news from the provinces which were set down in minute detail by recorders (*waqi'a-nawis*). These recorders were attached to the imperial records office, where state documents were kept, including copies of all correspondence with foreign rulers and imperial orders (*farman*) issued to the ranking nobles, *mansabdars*, and governors and other officials throughout the realm.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to reconstruct the precise sequential order of the various authors who were involved in writing the history of the first few years of the reign. According to one source, the distinguished literary figure Hakim Haziq Gilani, who held the important post of Reviser of Petitions (*'Arz-i-Mukarrar*), was at one time appointed to the task, but was subsequently removed due to the jealousy of rival authors.[10] A similar fate awaited the scholar Mulla 'Abd al-Latif Gujarati.[11] In the initial stages, the history would necessarily have been written on a year-by-year basis according to the Persian solar calendar. This method of reckoning was employed by Shah Jahan for the first ten years of his reign in continuation of the practice of his father Jahangir and grandfather Akbar. Shah Jahan's coronation actually occurred on 8 Jumada II 1037 (14 February 1628), but the first day of the Ilahi or Persian solar year was traditionally considered to mark the beginning of each successive regnal year. This day was called the *Nauroz*, or "New Day," and coincided with the day of the vernal equinox falling in the period 19-22 March of each year.[12]

*The Incomplete Histories by Tabataba'i and Qazwini*

In the seventh and eighth regnal years (1634-35), two other important authors became directly involved in the history project, although both eventually were dismissed at a later date. The first of these was the learned Persian scholar Mirza Jalala Tabataba'i, who is supposed to have arrived in India from Isfahan in 1044/1634, when he was commissioned to write an account of five years of the reign. A portion of this work still survives in manuscript under the title *Padshah Nama*, or "Chronicle of the Emperor". This portion extends from the beginning of the fifth solar regnal year to the end of the eighth; and according to one source, Tabataba'i was also prevented from proceeding further due to the envy of his rivals.[13]

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[10] According to Salih, *Shah Jahan Nama* (ed. Quraishi), Vol. 3, 243. For extant manuscripts of Hakim Haziq's *Kulliyat*, see Marshall, *Mughals in India*, 185; also reference to Haziq in this translation, 27. Haziq attained the *mansab* rank of 1,500/300, but retired in R.Y. 11 for unknown reasons.

[11] Salih, *Shah Jahan Nama*, Vol. 3, 339-40. For extant manuscripts of Mulla 'Abd al-Latif's fairly numerous literary works, see Marshall, 14-15.

[12] During the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir, each regnal year was calculated from *Nauroz* to *Nauroz*, a practice which Shah Jahan continued for the first decade of his reign. Of the surviving histories, Qazwini and Salih preserve this solar method of reckoning, but 'Abd al-Hamid Lahori's *Padshah Nama* abandons the solar reckoning entirely and replaces it with the Islamic lunar calendar.

[13] The manuscript used for this anthology is the fragmentary *Padshah Nama* by Tabataba'i preserved in the British Library (Or. 1676). For references to Tabataba'i, see Muhammad Salih, *Shah Jahan Nama*, Vol. 3, 338-39; C. Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, 3 vols. (London, 1879-83), Vol. 3, 999; Storey, Vol. 1, 565-66; Marshall, 228-29. It should be noted that

The other major author to appear on the scene in these years was Mirza Amina Qazwini, who was more fortunate in that he succeeded in actually completing one full cycle of ten years of the history before being dismissed and replaced by another author.[14] From Qazwini's own account, we learn that he had first entered royal service in the fifth regnal year, 1041-42/1632, as a writer (*munshi*) in the department of records. He was formally appointed court historian on 10 Sha'ban 1045/19 January 1636, at the auspicious occasion of the Emperor's forty-fourth solar birthday weighing ceremony.[15] In making the appointment, Shah Jahan commanded Qazwini to complete the account of the first ten years, and to begin collecting materials for a second volume as well. It is not certain when Qazwini completed the assigned first volume, but it seems likely that this prodigious feat was accomplished rather quickly, probably within not more than two or three years.

Qazwini's massive work was also entitled *Padshah Nama*, a title decided upon by the Emperor himself. In addition to coverage of the first ten years of the reign, the history is prefaced by a lengthy account of Shah Jahan's days of princehood, which remains the most definitive source for these early years. As with the later court historians, everything that Qazwini wrote had to be checked by the Emperor or a designated official, and once approved the text was not to be altered or amended in any way.

Unfortunately for Qazwini, in the second half of the tenth regnal year, Shah Jahan changed his mind completely about how the history was to be organized. Instead of following the solar reckoning, it was decreed that beginning with the eleventh year, the regnal years would henceforth be calculated according to the lunar calendar used for Islamic religious purposes.[16] Towards the end of his volume, Qazwini furnishes only bare details of Shah Jahan's abrupt decision to revise the chronology of his reign.[17]

### *The Padshah Nama of 'Abd al-Hamid Lahori and Muhammad Waris*

Whatever Shah Jahan's reasons, it is not difficult to imagine Qazwini's dismay at this turn of events. Once the question of religious orthodoxy had been raised, it was only a matter of time before Qazwini's recently completed volume according to the solar reckoning would also come under revisionist attack.[18] Certain of Qazwini's

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portions of Salih's *Shah Jahan Nama* are identical to the corresponding passages in Tabataba'i, indicating that Salih copied the earlier writer verbatim.

[14] The manuscript used in this anthology is Qazwini, *Padshah Nama* (BL Or. 173).

[15] Ibid., fol. 10r. In his account of this solar weighing, Lahori, Vol. 1-B, pp. 124-25b, makes no mention of Qazwini's appointment.

[16] Rieu, Vol. 1, 259: "The years of the reign are solar years, beginning on the festival of the Nauroz. The last however is incomplete, ending with the month of Shahrivar, or sixth month, corresponding to Jumada I, A.H. 1047. The reason alleged is that Shah Jahan, reverting from the solar to the lunar reckoning, ordered that the eleventh year should begin on the first of Jumada II, the month in which he had ascended to the throne."

[17] There it is suggested that the decision was prompted by the Emperor's desire to abide by the ways of religious orthodoxy (*sunna*), the proponents of which had apparently long regarded the solar reckoning as an essentially pagan practice.

[18] The precise date of Qazwini's removal from office is not known, but it must have happened fairly soon, probably sometime in the eleventh year, 1047-48 (corresponding to 1638); by which time the volume of the first decade must have been completed.

critics at court represented to the Emperor that the distinguished older scholar Shaikh 'Abd al-Hamid Lahori was a superior writer.[19] In fact, Lahori was widely hailed as the leading master of the much-admired, effusive prose style that had been originated by the great Abu'l-Fazl, the author of the mammoth *Akbar Nama* containing the history of Shah Jahan's grandfather. By this time, Shah Jahan must have already decided that Qazwini's entire first volume would have to be completely revised in accordance with the new lunar chronological scheme. As Shaikh 'Abd al-Hamid was at that time living in obscure retirement in Patna, orders were sent to the governor of the province to have the distinguished scholar brought to court so that he might be presented to the Emperor.[20]

As a result of this interview, Lahori was honored by being appointed court historian in place of Qazwini, with orders to revise the volume of his predecessor and to start work on the volume dealing with the second decade of the reign. The Emperor's specific charge was that the new *Padshah Nama* should be composed in the grandiloquent manner of Abu'l-Fazl, so that the noble achievements of his august reign might be recorded for posterity in an appropriately dignified literary form.

By the middle of the fourteenth regnal year, Lahori had already made substantial progress on the manuscript, for which he was lavishly rewarded on 7 Rabi' I 1051/16 June 1641, when the Emperor was at Lahore.[21] On this occasion, Lahori mentions that he was weighed against gold and presented with 3,000 rupees in addition. Since this was a most lavish bequest, it must have been made in recognition of a significant achievement on Lahori's part--most likely the completion of the revision of Qazwini's coverage of the first decade. At every stage in the writing, the text was checked and approved by a high government official. Primarily this was the responsibility of 'Allami Sa'd Allah Khan, who first entered royal service in the fourteenth year and who quickly became one of Shah Jahan's most trusted advisers, and was ultimately promoted at the beginning of the nineteenth year to the exalted office of Prime Minister. After preliminary checking by Sa'd Allah Khan, the text was read aloud to the Emperor, who frequently ordered emendations.

On the whole, Shah Jahan remained satisfied with Lahori's performance, and retained him as court historian until the author's declining health prevented him from continuing. At various points in time, other royal awards were made to the aging historian.[22] As his pupil Waris informs us, Lahori finally brought his second volume of the history to completion shortly before the middle of the twenty-second regnal year; and on 3 Zi'l-Qa'da 1058/19 November 1648, in recognition of this notable achievement, Shah Jahan awarded Lahori the handsome sum of 10,000 rupees--equivalent in value to considerably more than 100,000 dollars today.[23]

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[19] For 'Abd al-Hamid Lahori, see Salih, *Shah Jahan Nama*, Vol. 3, 340; Rieu, Vol. 1, 260; Storey, Vol. 1, 574-76; Marshall, 6.

[20] This information comes from Lahori's own Preface, Vol. 1-A, 10.

[21] Lahori, *Padshah Nama*, Vol. 2, 234.

[22] For example, on 4 Zi'l-Hijja 1055 (21 January 1646), in the middle of the nineteenth regnal year, Lahori was presented with an elephant on the occasion of the Emperor's annual solar weighing ceremony. About one year later, at the time of the Nauroz festival corresponding to 14 Safar 1057 (21 March 1647), the author received a grant of 4,000 rupees.

[23] Muhammad Waris, *Padshah Nama*, Vol. 3, British Library MS. Add. 6556 (dated 1109/1697), fol. 395v. For some reason, Salih does not mention Lahori's completion of the second volume of the history,

Though Lahori's effusive prose would not be highly regarded today, the two volumes of the *Padshah Nama* were a dazzling performance by the literary standards of the period of Shah Jahan. However, with respect to the chronological arrangement, it should be noted that Lahori avoids all mention of the earlier solar reckoning and therefore attempts to deceive the reader into believing that the lunar Hijri calendar was followed from the very beginning of the reign. Nor is the *Padshah Nama* of Qazwini mentioned, although it formed the basis for Lahori's revised version of the first decade.[24]

Shah Jahan himself was probably responsible for this twisting of historical truth. The truth would have shown him to be inconsistent, and this could not be tolerated. For this reason also, the histories contain no statements of any kind that are critical of the Emperor or his policies; and even military defeats are rationalized so that no blame should be attached to him. Throughout the text, effusive praise of the Emperor is carried to such extremes that he seems more a divinity than a mortal man. In fairness to Shah Jahan, however, it must be admitted that hyperbole and gross flattery were institutionalized features of courtly panegyrics, and that his court chronicles merely continue the practice of other kings before him--albeit with perhaps a more refined sense of the grand design of his own royal destiny.

Though Lahori was by now quite advanced in years, he continued in his duties as court historian, turning his attention to the third volume of the *Padshah Nama*. By 3 Rabi' I 1060/5 April 1650, two years after completing the second volume, he must have again made substantial progress for on that date he was awarded the sum of 4,000 rupees, at the time of the Emperor's sixtieth lunar birthday weighing ceremony.[25] However, the author's health began to decline sometime around 1063/1653, so that he was forced to retire after completing his coverage up through the twenty-sixth year. And on 26 Shawwal 1064/9 September 1654, toward the middle of the twenty-eighth regnal year, he died leaving the final four years of the third cycle to be completed by his successor.[26]

That successor was his pupil and collaborator Muhammad Waris, who seems to have been attached to the imperial records department, perhaps originally as a recorder (*waqi'a-nawis*). In his preface to the third volume of the *Padshah Nama*, Waris gives the circumstances of Lahori's retirement and his own appointment to complete the task.[27] He also mentions that after the death of the Prime Minister Sa'd Allah Khan on 22 Jumada II 1066/17 April 1656, the responsibility for checking and

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nor the recognition awarded to him by Shah Jahan, just at the time of his departure from Shahjahanabad toward Lahore and Kabul, due to the Qandahar crisis.

[24] The fact that Shah Jahan employed the solar reckoning for the first decade of his reign was strangely overlooked by S.H. Hodiwala, "The Jalus Years of Shah Jahan," in his *Historical Studies in Mughal Numismatics* (Bombay, 1923), 199-218.

[25] Salih, *Shah Jahan Nama*, Vol. 3, 84.

[26] *Ibid*., 145. In his Preface to Vol. 3 of the *Padshah Nama*, Muhammad Waris, the pupil and collaborator of Lahori, implies that he is the primary author of the entire third volume. However, on the evidence of 'Inayat Khan's *Shah Jahan Nama*, it appears that Lahori actually completed the history up through the 26th regnal year before his illness, leaving only the last four years of the third decade to be compiled by his successor; see: W.E. Begley and Z.A. Desai, eds. *The Shah Jahan Nama of 'Inayat Khan* (Delhi, 1989), 2.

[27] The manuscript used for this anthology is Muhammad Waris, *Padshah Nama*, British Library MS. Add. 6556, fols. 374ff.

approving the manuscript devolved on Mulla 'Ala al-Mulk Tuni, called Fazil Khan, who held the office of Majordomo (*mir-i-saman*).

As with all previous authors, Waris was expected to complete the chronicle of each regnal year as expeditiously as possible. From the available evidence, he seems to have completed the coverage of the third decade on schedule. The thirtieth regnal year ended on 30 Jumada I 1067/16 March 1657, and less than nine months later the third and final volume of the official court chronicle was completed and placed in the Royal Library.[28]

Collectively the three volumes of the *Padshah Nama* contain an incredible mass of historical data on the reign of Shah Jahan. Arranged chronologically within the text are detailed accounts of virtually every important public activity of the emperor, from the undertaking of major military campaigns and the construction of great architectural monuments like the Illumined Tomb, to the detailed listing of promotions and royal bequests, such as the valuable gifts periodically dispatched to the holy shrines of Mecca and Medina. In addition there is extensive coverage of all major battles, including transcripts of important state documents and letters exchanged with other Indian and foreign rulers and heads of state. Finally, at the end of each of the three volumes, there are short biographies of notable personalities of the period, and complete lists of almost 1,200 of the most important members of the Mughal nobility, arranged in categories according to their respective *mansab* ranks.[29]

*The Verse Histories of Kalim and Qudsi*

In addition to the prose histories of Shah Jahan, three of the leading poets at court also composed metrical histories of the reign, namely Kalim, Qudsi, and Yahya or Kashi. Only fragments of Kashi's work survive, but those by Kalim and Qudsi exist in versions that treat important events of the first decade of the reign.[30] Abu Talib Hamadani, who adopted the poetical title Kalim, was the most honored poet at Shah Jahan's court. Apparently born in Hamadan, he had studied in Shiraz before emigrating to India during the reign of Jahangir. After a brief return to Iran in 1028/1618, he finally settled down in India and eventually was designated Shah Jahan's poet-laureate, receiving the title *Malik al-Shu'ara* (lit., "king of poets"). According to Waris, Kalim died in Kashmir, on 15 Zi'l-Hijja 1062/17 November 1652, during Shah Jahan's twenty-sixth regnal year. Kalim's collected works amount to some 24,000 verses, including his metrical *Padshah Nama*, which contains a long section on the death of Mumtaz Mahal and the Illumined Tomb.[31]

Qudsi's proper name was Muhammad Jan, and he is supposed to have left his native Mashhad in his youth, arriving in India in 1041/1631-32, where his first patron

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[28] This conclusion is based upon 'Inayat Khan's explicit statement that all three volumes of the *Padshah Nama* were available for inspection in the Royal Library at the time of his appointment as Superintendent (*Darogha-i-Kutub Khana*) on 4 Rabi' I 1068 (10 December 1657).

[29] For an exhaustive study of the Mughal nobility using the data in the *Padshah Nama* and other sources, see M. Athar Ali, *The Apparatus of Empire, Awards of Ranks, Offices and Titles to the Mughal Nobility, 1574-1658* (Delhi, 1986); also the study now in preparation by W.E. Begley and Z.A. Desai, *The Mughal Nobility under Shah Jahan, An Illustrated Biographical Dictionary*.

[30] For the basic biographical information on these poets and manuscripts of their works, see Storey, Vol. 1, pp. 568ff.

[31] The manuscript used for this anthology is Kalim, *Padshah Nama*, British Library Or. 357.

was the important noble 'Abd Allah Khan Firoz Jang. In no way inferior to Kalim as a poet, Qudsi received numerous awards from Shah Jahan, although Salih informs us that he always remained in Kalim's shadow. Qudsi died, either in Kashmir or Lahore, in 1056/1646, about five years earlier than Kalim. His metrical history of Shah Jahan, entitled *Zafar Nama*, is an equally polished production, and also contains a fairly long section on the death of Mumtaz Mahal and the Illumined Tomb.[32]

The excerpts from both histories that are included here include accounts of the death of Mumtaz Mahal, taking her body to Agra, and poetic evocations of the beauty and grandeur of the Illumined Tomb. The contrast between their respective metrical eulogies of the tomb is quite striking; Kalim devotes several verses just to the inlay work, while Qudsi's more generalized treatment stresses the sanctity of the tomb and its "bounty-" and "pardon-" bestowing atmosphere. The excerpts included here represent the largest selection so far published of the works of either poet; a few of Qudsi's verses on the tomb were published early in this century, but with a mistaken attribution to Shah Jahan, instead of his court poet.[33]

*The Shah Jahan Nama by Muhammad Salih*

The *Padshah Nama* of 'Abd al-Hamid Lahori and Muhammad Waris concludes on the last day of the lunar month of Jumada I 1067/16 March 1657, and thus covers only the first three decades, leaving out the events of the final year and four months of the reign. Although the official court histories of Shah Jahan's reign were not extended beyond the close of the thirtieth year, his day-by-day activities were of course chronicled by the court recorders right up to the day of his forced abdication. In all probability, some sort of preliminary draft of the events of the thirty-first year and succeeding months must have already been written by the time of Aurangzeb's confinement of his father on 17 Ramazan 1068/18 June 1658.

Fortunately, a fairly detailed record of the final years of Shah Jahan is preserved in the unofficial, but extremely partisan history by Muhammad Salih Kambo. Variously titled *Shah Jahan Nama* or *'Amal-i-Salih* ("work of Salih"), Salih's lengthy history is the most accessible of all the histories, since it has been published in its entirety, both in the original Persian and recently in an Urdu translation as well.[34] Very little is known of the author, but he seems to have been attached to the official records department, and therefore must have had access to all important documents and copies of official correspondence. In his preface, Salih tells us that his history was completed in 1070/1659-60--or about two years after Shah Jahan's imprisonment in the Agra Fort. However, an epilogue gives details of the death of Shah Jahan on the night of 26 Rajab 1076/31 January 1666, and there are other references as late as

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[32] The manuscript used for this anthology is Qudsi, *Kulliyat*, Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library, Patna, No. 308. The authors are grateful to Dr. A. Bedar, the Director of the Khuda Bakhsh Library for kindly supplying microfilms and photocopies of this and several other manuscripts.

[33] See M. Moin-ud-Din, *The History of the Taj and the Buildings in its Vicinity* (Agra, 1905), 89-90. Various nineteenth-century Persian manuscripts on the Taj also contain Qudsi's verses, but usually only characterize them as well-known verses.

[34] For references to the various editions of Muhammad Salih's *Shah Jahan Nama*, see above, note 3; see also Rieu, Vol. 3, 263ff; Storey, Vol. 1, 578-81; Marshall, 338-39.

1081/1670-71.[35] Salih's elder brother was the distinguished scholar and author 'Inayat Allah Kambo, who died in 1082/1671 at the age of sixty-five. The death date of Muhammad Salih is uncertain, but he built a mosque at Lahore in 1070/1659-60, and very likely also constructed the impressive tomb in the same city in which both he and his brother are supposed to have been buried.[36]

It is not known when Salih began his *Shah Jahan Nama*, but it is greatly dependent upon the earlier official histories.[37] Unlike 'Inayat Khan, however, Salih was not content merely to summarize these earlier works, for he frequently recast certain passages in his own equally prolix style, and occasionally incorporated poetic asides of his own composition. Moreover, for the period following the close of the thirtieth regnal year, it is obvious that Salih's history is largely an independent creation. Apart from the *'Alamgir Nama*, Muhammad Salih's history is perhaps the most important original source for the events of the war of succession and the final days of Shah Jahan, of whom he was admittedly a very devoted partisan.

*The 'Alamgir Nama by Muhammad Kazim and Other Histories of Aurangzeb*

For the reign of Aurangzeb (1658-1707), the only official court history is the *'Alamgir Nama* by Muhammad Kazim, but it covers only the first ten years.[38] As official historian, Kazim had access to all the documentary materials preserved in the imperial records office, but he of course presents the sequence of events of the war of succession entirely from the perspective of the victor. Although Kazim was the son of Shah Jahan's more lucid early chronicler Qazwini, his style is equally dense and convoluted as that of Salih--as may be seen through the translations included here of their respective coverage of the death of Shah Jahan. After the tenth year Aurangzeb abolished the office of court historian, but there exist various shorter accounts of the rest of Aurangzeb's reign, namely the *Waqi'at-i-'Alamgiri* by 'Aqil Khan; the *Ma'asir-i-'Alamgiri* by Musta'id Khan; and the *Mir'at al-'Alam* by Bakhtawar Khan.[39] Because these authors were not writing to flatter the Emperor, and since they did not have ready access to all contemporary court documents, their treatment of events is much

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[35] For discussions of the problem of the author Muhammad Salih and the exact date of his history, see the Preface by Ghulam Yazdani, in *Shah Jahan Nama* (ed. Quraishi), Vol. 1, 1-16.

[36] For brief biographical details of 'Inayat Allah, see Salih, Vol. 3, 341-42; also Storey, Vol. 1, 578-79; Marshall, 263-64. As noted by Storey, 'Inayat Allah wrote a general history of the Mughals, called *Tarikh-i-Dil-Gusha*, but is "best known as the author of the collection of tales entitled *Bahar-i-Danish*, which he completed in 1061/1651."

For the inscribed mosque built by Muhammad Salih Kambu at Lahore, see M.A. Chaghatai, *Masajid-i-Lahur* (Lahore, 1976), 76ff; Chaghatai corrects the date of 1079/1668-69 cited by G. Yazdani in his preface to his edition of the *Shah Jahan Nama* (Vol. 1, 9). For the supposed tomb of Salih and his brother, which is not inscribed, see S. Muhammad Latif, *Lahore, Its History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities* (Lahore, 1892; reprinted 1956), 208-09. As remarked by Storey, Vol. 1, 589, Latif offers no evidence to support his statement that Salih died in 1085 (1674-75), or about four years after the latest date referred to in the *Shah Jahan Nama*.

[37] As mentioned above, Salih's coverage of the 5th-8th regnal years appears to have been borrowed verbatim from the fragmentary *Padshah Nama* by Tabataba'i.

[38] See Muhammad Kazim, *'Alamgir Nama*, ed. by Khadim Husain and Abdu-l-Hai (Calcutta, 1865-73).

[39] For references to published translations of these and other histories of Aurangzeb, see above, note 5; see also Storey, Vol. 1, 585-87; Marshall, 325.

more summary in nature--as may be seen through comparison of their accounts of the death of Shah Jahan with those of Salih and Kazim.

## THE TAJ MAHAL IN MUGHAL DOCUMENTS

Only a very few official Mughal documents--in fact, only the four that are reproduced and translated in this anthology--survive that pertain to the Taj Mahal. It is well known that the Mughal rulers maintained an incredibly elaborate bureaucracy, one that generated literally hundreds of thousands of official documents each year, on every conceivable matter.[40] Unfortunately, the great majority have been lost, including the detailed accounts of daily wages and other construction costs for royal architectural projects like the Taj Mahal. However, we may get some idea of the quantity of such records that must originally have existed for the Taj by looking at the extensive documents surviving in the Ottoman archives--such as the detailed account books connected with the construction of the sixteenth-century Suleymaniyye mosque in Istanbul, built by the great architect Sinan, which list salaries and daily wages paid to scores of artisans and day laborers.[41] Moreover, various documents relating to artisans in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Rajasthan have recently come to light and it may be that similar Mughal documents may yet turn up as well.[42]

The four official documents included in this anthology are all royal farmans addressed to Raja Jai Singh of Amber, only one of which specifically mentions the Taj Mahal--referred to as the "Illumined Tomb" (*rauza-i-munavvara*).[43] The existence of this document, which is a contemporary certified copy of the now lost original farman, is preserved in the Jaipur Palace Kapad Dwara Collection.[44] Although its existence has been known for some time, its photographic reproduction has only recently become available, and its full translation is being given here for the first time. This

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[40] Originally the state records and documents pertaining to the reign of Shah Jahan must have numbered in the millions. Following the decline of the empire in the 18th century, most of these documents were either dispersed or destroyed, although several thousand are preserved in Hyderabad; see Yusuf Husain Khan, *Selected Documents of Shah Jahan's Reign* (Hyderabad, 1950); and M. Ziyauddin Ahmad Shakeb, *Mughal Archives, A Descriptive Catalogue of Documents Pertaining to the Reign of Shah Jahan*, Vol. 1 (Hyderabad, 1977); and Momin Mohiuddin, *The Chancellery and Persian Epistolography under the Mughals, from Babur to Shah Jahan* (Calcutta, 1971).

[41] See Omer Lufti Barkan, *Suleymaniye Camii ve Imareti Insaati*, 1550-1557, 2 vols. (Ankara, 1972-79); cf. the important study by Howard Crane, *Risale-i-Mi'mariyye, An Early Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Treatise on Architecture* (Leiden, 1987).

[42] See Anjali Chatterji, "Wage Structure of Artisans and Labourers Engaged in Constructional Work in Medieval Rajasthan (A.D. 1670-1761)--A Case Study of Bikaner State," in *Proceedings of 46th Indian History Conference* (Amritsar, 1986), 315-325.

[43] For brief mentions of the surviving farmans and other documents pertaining to the Taj Mahal, see R. Nath, "Notice on the Imperial Firmans Related to the Construction of the Taj Mahal," *Medieval India: A Miscellany*, Vol. 4 (1977); cf. his *The Taj Mahal and its Incarnation, Original Persian Data on its Builders, Material, Costs, Measurements, etc.* (Jaipur, 1985). In the opinion of the present authors, the data contained in the various nineteenth-century Taj manuscripts are entirely spurious, and Nath is in error when he accepts them as genuine; consequently, his studies of the documentary sources should be consulted with great caution.

[44] This important document was recently published by G.N. Bahura and Chandramani Singh, *Catalogue of Historical Documents in Kapad Dwara, Jaipur* (Jaipur, 1988); see also *Descriptive List of Documents in the Kapad Dwara Collection, Jaipur*, Delhi: National Archives of India, 1971, p. 2.

document, which dates to the sixth regnal year, or about two years following the death of Mumtaz Mahal, confirms what is known from the histories; namely, that Raja Jai Singh donated his ancestral property for the construction of the Taj, and that in accordance with Islamic practice, he was granted four other estates at Agra in exchange.

The purpose of the other three royal farmans, whose originals are preserved in the Rajasthan State Archives in Bikaner, is to request Raja Jai Singh to ensure that the marble required at Agra--presumably for the construction of the Taj--be dispatched as expeditiously as possible.[45] The first of these farmans is dated September 1632, or about nine months after the actual construction work on the Taj had started. The second farman is dated February 1633, and reiterates the order issued five months earlier that the shipments of marble should be made expeditiously; specifically, some 230 cartloads of stone are to be dispatched without delay, from nine different administrative regions (*mahal*).

At first glance, it may seem surprising that large quantities of marble would be required so soon after the commencement of construction, but the evidence of the dated inscriptions on the Taj implies that virtually all of the structural work on the main mausoleum, including facing with marble slabs, must have been completed by 1045-46/1636-37, or less than six years after the death of Mumtaz Mahal.

The fourth farman is dated Safar 1047/June 1637, and orders Raja Jai Singh to halt the quarrying activities of his own agents, so as not to impede the prompt shipment of marble required in Akbarabad. These shipments of marble were apparently needed to complete the final facing of the interior walls of the mausoleum, which as we know from the interior colophon of the calligrapher Amanat Khan, were brought to completion in 1048, the twelfth regnal year--corresponding to the period between October 1638 and April 1639.

Also published in this anthology is a new translation of the well-known letter of Prince Aurangzeb, dated Muharram 1063/December 1652, mentioning that some repairs were needed to the tomb, which had leaked in several places during the previous rainy season.[46] When certain lapses in the Persian text of this letter are corrected, it seems clear that the problem with the dome was water leakage and not cracks, as some writers have construed this passage.

Three other documents of considerable historical interest are also included in this section, although they have no direct connection to the Taj. The first two are the *hukm* issued by Mumtaz Mahal in the first regnal year and the *nishan* issued by Princess Jahanara in the fifth regnal year--that is, one year following her mother's death.[47] The third is an endowment document for Wazir Khan's mosque in Lahore, dated Ramazan 1051/April 1641, or just about the time that Shah Jahan also would have had an endowment document prepared for the Illumined Tomb. Wazir Khan's deed is of special interest for the light it sheds upon the amounts of stipends paid to

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[45] These and other documents have been catalogued in *Farmans, Manshurs and Nishans, addressed by the Imperial Mughals to the Princes of Rajasthan* (Bikaner, 1962).

[46] See *Ruqa'at-i-'Alamgiri*, ed. by S.N.A. Nadvi, 2 vols. (Azamgarh, 1930); cf. Abd al-Ghafur, ed. *Adab-i-'Alamgiri*, 2 vols. (Lahore, 1971).

[47] Both of these documents were previously published in S.A.I. Tirmizi, *Edicts from the Mughal Harem* (Delhi, 1979).

certain functionaries--namely, the imam and muezzin--during the very period that the Taj was being brought to final completion.[48]

A word may be said about the kinds of documentary sources that are *not* included in this anthology. It is well known, of course, that there exist in manuscript libraries and archives all over the world a fairly large number of brief nineteenth-century Persian manuscripts, perhaps forty or more, that purport to give "authentic" details of the overall costs of the Taj Mahal, including the monthly salaries of architects, calligraphers and other craftsmen, as well as the costs of each separate structure within the entire tomb complex. In the opinion of the editors of this anthology, these manuscripts are spurious fabrications, with no claim to historical accuracy. With regard to the construction costs, the totals found in these manuscripts are in complete conflict with the construction cost as given in the original Mughal sources, namely 50 lakhs of rupees from the royal treasury--a figure which is entirely consistent with other details of expenditures on military campaigns as well as other major buildings of Shah Jahan, some of which, like the Moti Masjid at Agra and the Jami' Masjid at Delhi, have their cost boldly inscribed on their facades. Consequently, since the data contained in these manuscripts, particularly the lists of artisans who supposedly worked on the Taj, cannot be verified in any authentic literary or documentary source of the seventeenth century, they have been entirely excluded from this anthology.[49]

## THE INSCRIPTIONS ON THE TAJ MAHAL, AND THE CALLIGRAPHER AMANAT KHAN

### *The Historical and Qur'anic Inscriptions*

In the arrangement followed in the anthology, the historical and Qur'anic inscriptions are given and translated in Part III, while Part IV assembles historical references to the calligrapher Amanat Khan, along with excerpts from the inscriptions on other monuments designed by him during his long career.

Complete photographic documentation of the extensive program of Qur'anic inscriptions on the Taj has been assembled here for the first time, with translations given on facing pages for all the inscriptions, in an attempt to convey some sense of the continuous thread of profound religious meaning that links the different parts of the tomb thematically, in a way analogous to the iconographic programs of religious structures decorated with images. The interpretion of the Qur'anic inscriptions lies outside the scope of this anthology and will be treated in a separate volume currently in preparation.[50]

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[48] Apparently no longer extant, this document was published in 1896 from an eye-copy by S.M. Latif, *Lahore, Its History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities* (reprinted Lahore, 1956).

[49] The editors plan to undertake a systematic survey of these manuscripts in the near future, as part of a projected second volume of this anthology, dealing with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sources. As noted above, the recent book by R. Nath, *The Taj Mahal and its Incarnation* (Jaipur, 1985), accepts the genuineness of much of the data contained in these highly suspect manuscripts, and hence arrives at completely unwarranted conclusions.

[50] On the question of the iconographic uses of calligraphy on Mughal monuments of the period of Shah Jahan, see the studies by W.E. Begley, "The Myth of the Taj Mahal and a New Theory of its Symbolic Meaning," *The Art Bulletin*, 61 (1979): 7-37; "Amanat Khan and the Calligraphy on the Taj

The evidence of the dated historical inscriptions is of course absolutely primary for establishing the precise chronology of the tomb's construction. Unfortunately, many writers on the Taj have followed instead the erroneous statements contained in the accounts of Tavernier and other seventeenth-century European travelers, particularly his statement that the Taj took twenty-two years to complete. In fact, the inscriptions tell us that the main mausoleum was completed in six years or less after construction began in January 1632. While two of the dated inscriptions on the Taj, dated 1046/1636-37 and 1048/1638-39, are now well known, published here for the first time is yet another dated inscription, first discovered by W.E. Begley in 1985. Dated 1045/1645-46, this important overlooked inscription is the earliest on the tomb and sheds important new light on the question of the Taj's chronology; specifically it establishes a slightly different order of completion for the inscriptions on the tomb. First to be undertaken were the inscriptions on the upper register inside the great domed hall, dated 1045. The exterior inscriptions on the west facade followed next, in 1046. Finally, in 1048, the workers again returned to the main hall, presumably after the higher scaffolding had been removed, and completed the inscriptions on the lower walls.

*The Calligrapher Amanat Khan*

The identity of the calligrapher Amanat Khan is clearly documented both by his two signatures on the tomb and by references to him in the court histories. As the building's single most important decorative feature, the calligraphy was of course primarily intended to convey meaning to those able to read the writing. Because of this, Amanat Khan's important contribution to the tomb may be said to be almost equal in importance to the overall plan conceived by the architect. Based upon the documents assembled here and also upon other sources, the broad outlines of the career of Amanat Khan are now fairly clear.

From the Persian histories we learn that Amanat Khan was the title awarded to the Persian scholar and courtier 'Abd al-Haqq of Shiraz, who came to India as a young man, probably in the company of his ultimately far more famous brother Mulla Shukr Allah of Shiraz, better known by his title Afzal Khan.[51] Both brothers had been educated in Shiraz, which was then widely renowned as a center of learning; both were scholars, and both came to India to seek their fortunes--probably early in the

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Mahal," *Kunst des Orients*, 12, 1-2 (1978-79): 5-60; and "The Symbolic Role of Calligraphy on Three Imperial Mosques of Shah Jahan," in J. Williams, ed., *Kaladarsana, American Studies in the Art of India* (New Delhi, 1981). See also the important article by Erica Dodd, "The Image of the Word: Notes on the Religious Iconograpy of Islam," *Berytus*, 18 (1969), 35-79; cf. Oleg Grabar, "The Inscriptions of the Madrasah-Mausoleum of Qaytbay," in *Studies in Honor of George C. Miles* (Beirut, 1974).

[51] Unfortunately, the exact date of Afzal Khan's arrival in India is nowhere given in the sources, not even in the mammoth memoirs of his first patron; see M. Hidayet Husain, ed., *Ma'asir-i-Rahimi* (Memoirs of 'Abd ur-Rahim Khan Khanan) by Mulla 'Abd ul-Baqi Nahavandi, 3 vols, Bibliotheca Indica (Calcutta 1910-31), vol. 3, 27-30, where a biography of Afzal Khan is given. This biography seems to imply that the Khan-i-Khanan had been his patron for three years before he entered the service of Shah Jahan around 1611. Thus he must have been in India by 1608, or slightly before. Although Amanat Khan must have either accompanied his brother to India, or else arrived within a very short time afterward, the sources are silent about his early activities. However, he must have established a reputation as a calligrapher fairly quickly, since around 1608 or thereabouts, he seems to have been appointed by Jahangir to design the calligraphy for Akbar's tomb at Sikandra, then under construction.

4. Portrait of the Prime Minister Afzal Khan, brother of calligrapher Amanat Khan, two months before his death at age seventy (top row, right), standing next to Khan Dauran and Wazir Khan; detail of *Shah Jahan Honoring 'Ali Mardan Khan at Lahore on 22 Rajab 1048* (29 November 1638), Oxford, Bodleian Library.

reign of Jahangir, who became emperor in late 1605. Due to his high position at court, Afzal Khan's career is much better documented than that of his younger brother. He first entered the service of the powerful noble and important patron of scholarship and the arts, 'Abd al-Rahim Khan-i-Khanan (1556-1627); but had the foresight in 1611 to shift his allegiance to the rising young Prince Khurram, in whose service he remained for the rest of his life. At his coronation in 1628, Shah Jahan appointed Afzal Khan to the office of Major-Domo (*Mir Saman*), with the military rank (*mansab*) of 4,000 *zat* and 2,000 *suwar*; the very next year, 1629, he promoted him to Prime Minister (*Diwan-i-Kull*), with a substantial increase in military rank.[52] Throughout the first ten years of Shah Jahan's reign, Afzal Khan continued to receive rewards for his distinguished service to the crown, ultimately attaining the military rank of 7,000--the very highest rank granted by Shah Jahan to any noble, apart from princes of the royal house. On 12 Ramadan 1048/17 January 1638, less than a year after being appointed to this exalted rank, Afzal Khan died in Lahore at the age of seventy, having been in Shah Jahan's service for a total of twenty-eight years.[53] He is believed to be buried in the Chini-ka-Rauza at Agra, an imposing glazed-tile building, for which Amanat Khan may have designed the calligraphic Qur'anic inscriptions.

Unfortunately, the Persian histories contain only a few brief notices of Amanat Khan himself, indicating that his position at court was that of a minor dignitary at best. The earliest of these notices occurs in 1631, when Shah Jahan appointed him to serve as diplomatic escort for the Persian noble Muhammad 'Ali Beg, who had come to India as ambassador from the new Safavid monarch Shah Safi (r. 1629-1642). Amanat Khan went from Agra to Panipat to receive the ambassador, escorting him first to Agra and from there to Burhanpur, where Shah Jahan had established his military headquarters. They reached Burhanpur after the middle of March, less than three months before Mumtaz Mahal suddenly died in childbirth on 17 Zi'l-Hijja 1040/17 June 1631.[54]

We next hear of Amanat Khan one year later in Zi'l-Hijja 1041/June 1632, when Shah Jahan returned to Agra and observed the first anniversary (*'urs*) of his wife's death at the very site where work had started a few months earlier on her stupendous tomb. Due to delay in reaching Agra, the first 'Urs ceremony was observed some two weeks late, but as soon as the Emperor reached the Dehra Bagh outside the city, he bestowed a number of honors on different nobles, including the title of Amanat Khan (meaning "Lord of Trust") to 'Abd al-Haqq, along with a promotion to the mansab rank of 900 *zat* and 200 *suwar*. The title symbolized the high regard in which the Emperor held him, and the promotion in rank guaranteed him a considerable

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[52] The hierarchy of the Mughal nobility was based upon the assignment of a *mansab*, or official rank, calculated according to two numerical categories: "person" (*zat*), which was honorary; and "horse" (*suwar*), which referred to the horsemen that a noble was theoretically expected to maintain--on the generous stipend allotted him for that purpose from the imperial treasury. The chronogram composed to commemorate Afzal Khan's appointment as Prime Minister clearly reflects the high esteem in which he was held: *shud Aflatun wazir-i-Iskandar*, "Plato became the vizier of Alexander" (*Ma'asir al-Umara*, Vol. 1, 152); the numerical value of the letters equals 1038, corresponding to 1628-29.

[53] Based upon the stated age of Afzal Khan at the time of his death, the approximate date of his birth would be 1570-1.

[54] For a brief discussion of this embassy, see Saksena, 211-4; cf. Riazul Islam, *Indo-Persian Relations, A Study of the Political and Diplomatic Relations between the Mughal Empire and Iran* (Teheran, 1970).

permanent income. It is possible that the honors may have had something to do with Amanat Khan's appointment as calligrapher for the Taj Mahal--the foundations of which were already well underway by this time--as well as for his recent diplomatic services to the state. In any event, about one year later, in Muharram 1043/July 1633, Shah Jahan again honored Amanat Khan, this time by raising his rank to that of *Hazari*, or "Commander of One Thousand"; in this instance, the promotion was probably made in recognition of his role as calligrapher of the tomb.[55]

Although construction work on the tomb was obviously progressing quite rapidly, the task of transferring and inlaying Amanat Khan's calligraphic designs onto the vast marble surfaces of the tomb must have moved more slowly. The calligraphy could not have been inlaid until the marble facing of the mausoleum was in place, and it seems unlikely that this could have been accomplished much before the end of 1633 or the beginning of 1634. As we know from the newly discovered dated signature and colophon of Amanat Khan on the upper register inside the domed hall, the calligraphy on the upper register inside the tomb was completed in 1045/1635-36. From the dated inscription on the west grilled door, it appears that the exterior calligraphy was completed one year later in 1046/1636-37. On 1 Sha'ban 1047/19 December 1637, about two years after the colophon dated 1045, the histories record that Shah Jahan honored Amanat Khan with the gift of an elephant, "as a reward for the inscription which he had written inside" the tomb. Finally, according to the evidence of the second colophon of Amanat Khan inside the tomb, the lower parts of the walls were completed by 1048, during Shah Jahan's twelfth regnal year (i.e., sometime between October 1638 and April 1639).

Exactly one year after Amanat Khan had been awarded a ceremonial elephant, his distinguished statesman brother Afzal Khan died in Lahore at the age of seventy; and a few days later, Shah Jahan received Amanat Khan and his two sons with honor, as a tribute to the deceased. With the passing of Afzal Khan, the Persian histories contain no further references to Amanat Khan, except for the brief mention that he died in the eighteenth regnal year, which corresponds to the period from August 1644 to July 1645. While Amanat Khan's precise age at death is unknown, he must have been at least in his late sixties or early seventies, judging from his brother's age when he died six years earlier.

Whether Amanat Khan continued as the Taj's chief calligrapher right up to his death is not stated in the Persian chronicles. Work certainly continued on other parts of the complex after his death, as we know from the epigraph dated 1057/1647 on the garden facade of the main gateway--or some fifteen years after construction began in January 1632. Even this figure may be too high, however, since both Persian histories state unequivocally that the tomb had "recently been completed" at the time of Shah Jahan's observance of Mumtaz Mahal's twelfth death anniversary there in Zi'l-Hijja

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[55] *Badshahnama*, Vol. 1-A, 535. The promotion came only a few weeks after the formal observance of the second anniversary of Mumtaz Mahal's death, by which time the mausoleum was far enough along for the body of Mumtaz Mahal to be removed from its temporary place of burial in the garden and buried in the crypt, and for an elaborate gold railing to be set up surrounding the cenotaph. Since it seems unlikely that this railing would have been exposed to the elements, it is possible that the interior piers for supporting the dome had already been erected.

1052/February 1643--suggesting that the construction of the entire complex took only eleven years.

*Other Calligraphic Inscriptions Designed by Amanat Khan*

The histories do not answer several important questions about Amanat Khan, such as: How did he achieve his reputation as a calligrapher before being appointed by Shah Jahan to execute the designs for the Taj? Why was Amanat Khan appointed and not one of the several other renowned calligraphers at the Mughal court? And as for the inscriptional program, who was responsible for devising it--the calligrapher or someone else?

Some light is shed upon these three questions when we turn to the calligraphy designed by Amanat Khan for other architectural monuments, at other stages in his career. One of these other inscriptions push back our knowledge of Amanat Khan's career as a calligrapher a good twenty years before he began work on the Taj, and strongly suggests that Shah Jahan selected him to design the inscriptions for his wife's tomb precisely on account of the nature and scope of his earlier experience.

There are only three other extant monuments with inscriptions bearing Amanat Khan's signature, although undoubtedly he must have worked on others as well: the tomb of Shah Jahan's grandfather, Akbar, at Sikandra; the Madrasa Shahi mosque in Agra city; and the Sarai Amanat Khan near Lahore. The first of these monuments is extremely well known, while the second and third were first published only a decade ago.[56]

The inscriptions on the magnificent gateway of Akbar's tomb were first published in translation in 1874, but it was not recognized until many years later that the calligrapher was Amanat Khan. This is because he signed himself 'Abd al-Haqq Shirazi instead of Amanat Khan. As we know from the inscriptions, Akbar's tomb was completed in 1022/1613--or some twenty years before 'Abd al-Haqq received his title from Shah Jahan. Even though the Persian histories give Amanat Khan's real name, the connection with 'Abd al-Haqq went unnoticed until the discovery of the colophons on the Madrasa Shahi mosque, where the calligrapher signed both name and title.

When we look closely at the inscriptions on the gateway at Sikandra, we immediately notice that 'Abd al-Haqq's signature is equally as prominent as it is inside the Taj, and that there are also many stylistic traits in the writing and overlapping design that link the two calligraphic projects. There are altogether three colophons on the gateway, two on the south facade, and one on the north. The first and most prominent of these is on the vertical border at the left side of the great entrance archway:[57]

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[56] See W.E. Begley, "Amanat Khan and the Calligraphy on the Taj Mahal," *Kunst des Orients*, 12 (1978-79), 5-60.

[57] It is interesting that the main colophon on the Sikandra gateway includes the name of 'Abd al-Haqq's father, Qasim al-Shirazi, who may be the calligrapher of the same name who achieved a certain renown in Shiraz around the last quarter of the sixteenth century, as we know from various manuscripts bearing his signature--including an extremely fine copy of Nizami's *Khamsa*, dated 992/1584, and now in the University of Pennsylvania Museum.

> . . . In the seventh year of the august accession of Jahangir, corresponding with one thousand and twenty-one Hijri, after seven years, the building was completed and the inscription finished. Written by 'Abd al-Haqq, son of Qasim al-Shirazi, in 1022.

This colophon comes at the end of a long and effusive panegyric on the greatness of Akbar and his successor Jahangir, written in Persian prose and running almost the entire length of the ribbon-like calligraphic border that frames the entire recessed archway. The second colophon on the entrance side of the Sikandra gateway is found at the end of a series of Persian couplets running across the bottom of the calligraphic border--inscribed in six separate panels, three on each side of the entrance arch. It is in the sixth and last of these panels that the colophon is inscribed in very small script at the left, merely stating: "Written by 'Abd al-Haqq al-Shirazi in 1022" [1613]. The third and final epigraph signed by Amanat Khan occurs on the north facade of the gateway, in the same relative position as the first--that is, on the vertical border at the left side of the archway. Although much larger in format, the wording of this inscription is identical to the preceding one just mentioned.

The internal evidence of the eulogy suggests the possibility that Amanat Khan himself may have been the author. This supposition seems to provide the most plausible explanation for the various explicit and implicit allusions to calligraphy within the Sikandra inscriptions--especially the reference in the opening phrases to: ". . . this towering portal and this incomparable archway (*aiwan*), the inscriptions of which have been designed and executed by the calligraphy-adorning pen" (. . . *ka naqsh-i kitaba an ba-qalam-i raqam tazyin ibda wa takwin yafta*).

Such explicit mention of the calligraphy strongly suggests that it is the calligrapher himself who is speaking--that Amanat Khan, in short, was both author and scribe. That this should be the case is hardly surprising, since all Persian calligraphers--at least all those who were highly esteemed--were by definition also scholars and literary men. Furthermore, from what we know of the careers of Amanat Khan and his statesman brother Afzal Khan, both men seem to have been distinguished for their learning and scholarship, as a result of the traditional education which they acquired in their native city of Shiraz.

In addition to the considerable prestige Amanat Khan achieved for executing the calligraphy on Akbar's tomb, there is evidence that he also was given a post in the Mughal Royal Library--namely, the inspection notations (*'arz-dida*) and seal impressions bearing the name and title of the calligrapher which have been noticed in various manuscripts formerly in the Royal Library.[58]

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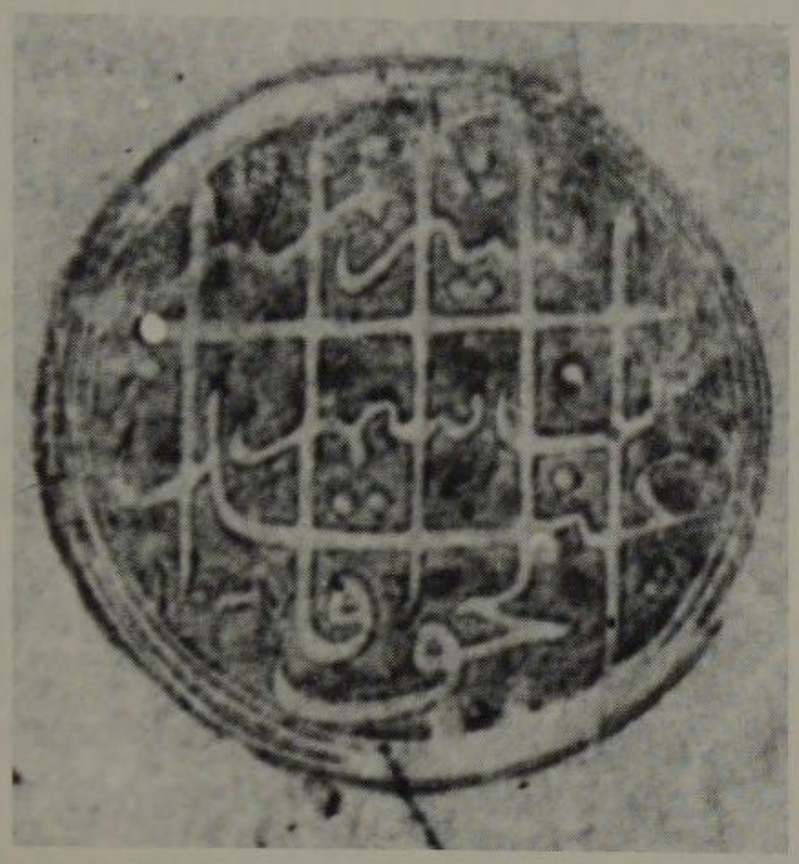
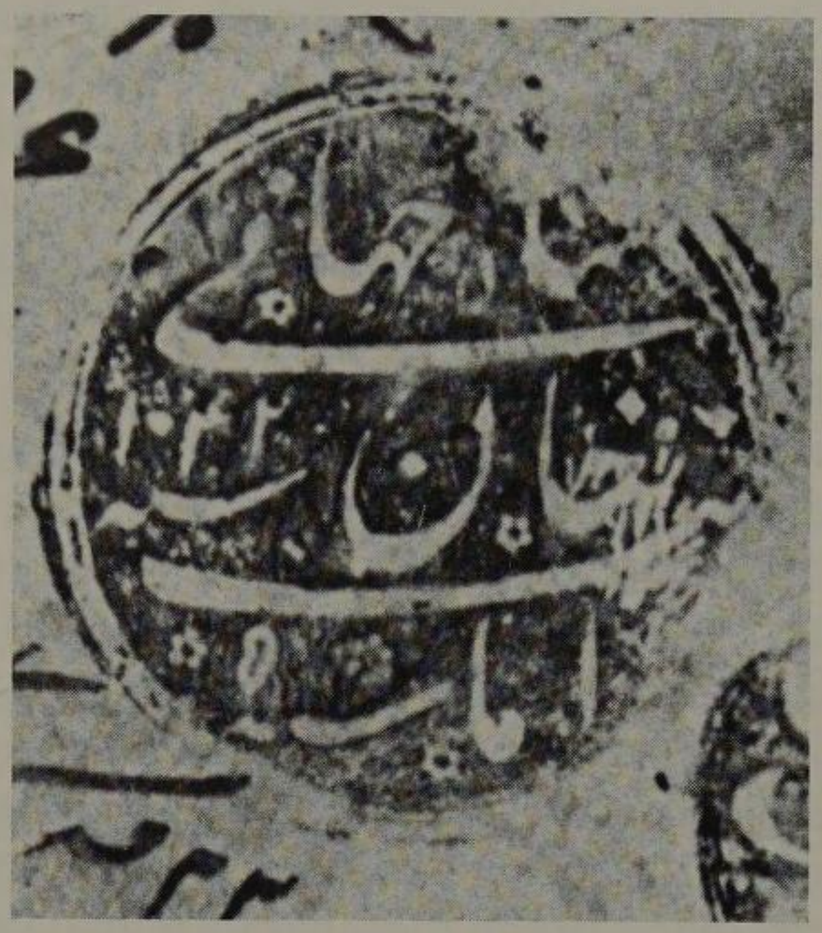
[58] These include the famous *Razm-Nama* manuscript in Jaipur, which bears a seal with a signature with wording identical to that found on the Sikandra gateway: *'Abd al-Haqq, son of Qasim Shirazi*; see M.A. Chaghatai, "The Illustrated Edition of the *Razm Nama*," *Bulletin of Deccan College Research Institute*, 5 (1943-44), 288. 'Abd al-Haqq acquired the title Amanat Khan toward the end of 1041/June 1632, and immediately began to use it, as we know from a seal impression dated 1042/1632-33, found in a Persian manuscript in the British Library, Add. 16, 704 (a history of the city of Herat, copied in 1002/1593-94); see Rieu, *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, Vol. 1, 207.



5. Seal of 'Abd al-Haqq, later titled Amanat Khan: *'Abd al-Haqq, son of Qasim al-Shirazi*.



6. Seal of Amanat Khan: *Amanat Khan Shah Jahani, year 1042* (1632-33).

If we are correct in suggesting that 'Abd al-Haqq was the author of the prose eulogy on the gateway, it seems logical to assume that he also composed the three Persian couplets inscribed just above the dado panel on both sides of the entrance. What is significant is the obviously deliberate positioning of the couplets, with their explicit Paradise imagery, making them the last words to be read before passing through the gateway into the vast garden enclosure:

> Hail, blessed space happier than the garden of Paradise!
> Hail, lofty building higher than the Divine Throne!
>
> A Paradise, the garden of which has thousands of Rizwans as its servants,
> A Garden, the terrain of which contains thousands of celestial Paradises.
>
> "The pen of the mason of the Divine Decree has written upon its threshold:
> "*These are the gardens of Eden, enter them to live forever!*"

The Paradise imagery of the Persian passages inscribed on the Sikandra gateway thus closely parallels the imagery of the Qur'anic passages inscribed on the Taj Mahal--particularly those on the gateway.

In addition to Akbar's tomb, the Madrasa Shahi mosque in Agra city also includes inscriptions bearing the name of Amanat Khan. The mosque itself is small and unpretentious, although, judging from its current name, it may have once formed part of a much larger architectural complex. There are three marble mihrab niches in the mosque, with Qur'anic passages written in the same raised relief technique as on the Sikandra gateway. Two of the mihrabs have colophons signed by Amanat Khan--the central mihrab bearing two fairly large colophons and the left, or southern, mihrab bearing a much smaller panel.

The inscriptions are mostly Qur'anic passages, although the outer band concludes with some traditional Arabic formulas, just above the large rectangular signature panel at the bottom left side of the mihrab.[59] The colophon reads: "Written by 'Abd al-Haqq, called Amanat Khan, the year 1045" [1635-36]. Immediately adjacent to his panel, there is another, smaller colophon bearing an identically worded inscription--except for the date, 1046/1636-37, which is one year later. In contrast to both of the colophons on the central mihrab, the small inscribed panel at the bottom left of the southern mihrab gives only the calligrapher's title: "Written by Amanat Khan al-Shirazi". Since it comes at the end of the entire series of inscribed mihrabs, this inscription calls to mind the similarly placed signature at the end of the Persian couplets on the Sikandra gateway.

But while the Madrasa Shahi Mosque provides further evidence of Amanat Khan's calligraphic skills, it does not assist in the task of reconstructing his activities in the final years of his life. The inscriptions inside the Taj document his whereabouts until around 1048/1638, but we know from the histories that he lived for about six more years, dying in the eighteenth regnal year, or 1054-55/1644-45.

Although unnoticed until about a decade ago, the most important project of these years was undoubtedly the design and supervision of the glazed-tile inscriptions on the arched entrances to a large caravanserai near Lahore which bears his name, Sarai Amanat Khan, located on the old Mughal highway to Lahore, about twelve miles southwest of Amritsar.[60] Even in their present damaged condition, the inscriptions on the west entrance clearly state that the sarai was built: "in the fourteenth year of the auspicious reign of His Majesty [Shah Jahan], corresponding to the year one thousand and fifty Hijri. . . ." [1640-41].

While this information comes at the end of a long prose dedication, the Persian couplets inscribed on the east entrance make it clear that Amanat Khan was the patron of the monument-- "on whose arch he wrote [the inscriptions] in his own hand." The beginning of both the west and east dedications are clearly designed to flatter Shah Jahan--"that victorious King of Kings, endowed with good fortune, wisdom, and justice. . . ." Since all of the inscriptions were undoubtedly composed by Amanat Khan, they attest to his literary abilities, and lend further support to the suggestion that he was the author as well as the designer of the inscriptions on the gateway of Akbar's tomb; they further suggest that he was probably the person responsible for selecting the Qur'anic verses inscribed on the Taj Mahal.

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[59] The right-hand mihrab is inscribed with verses 18-19 of Sura 9, *al-Tauba*, "The Repentance" (followed by a formulaic prayer); the central mihrab with verses 9-11 of Sura 62, *al-Jumu'a*, "The Assembly" (followed by a formulaic prayer) and verses 27-29 of Sura 48, *al-Fath*, "The Victory"; and the left-hand mihrab with verse 35--the "Light Verse"--of Sura 24, *al-Nur*, "The Light" (followed by a formulaic prayer).

[60] First published in W.E. Begley, "Amanat Khan and the Calligraphy on the Taj Mahal"; see also the same author's "Four Mughal Caravanserais Built during the Reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan," *Muqarnas*, 1 (1983), 166-179; and "A Mughal Caravanserai Built and Inscribed by Amanat Khan, Calligrapher of the Taj Mahal," in F.F. Asher and G.S. Gai, eds., *Indian Epigraphy, Its Bearing on the Hisyory of Art* (Delhi, 1984).

## THE ARCHITECT AND SUPERVISORS OF CONSTRUCTION

### *The Architect Ustad Ahmad Lahori*

Ustad Ahmad Lahori (Master Ahmad of Lahore), who died in 1059/1649, was one of the great architects of the seventeenth century. Though he referred to himself simply as Ahmad Mi'mar (Ahmad the architect), he was at once a skilled engineer and learned scholar in the sciences of astronomy, geometry, and mathematics. Ultimately, he rose to become the chief architect of Shah Jahan, who--on the evidence of the *Diwan-i-Muhandis*--awarded him the honorary title of Nadir al-'Asr, or "Wonder of the Age," in recognition of his artistic accomplishments.[61]

The exact date of Ustad Ahmad's birth is unknown; but since by 1044/1634-35 his eldest son 'Ata Allah had already composed a scholarly treatise on mathematics, it may be presumed that the father must have been born sometime around 1570-75, in order to have fathered a child born around 1600-10. In the official court history of Shah Jahan's reign, the *Padshah Nama*, Ustad Ahmad is credited, along with a colleague named Ustad Hamid, with being the skillful designer of the vast palace complex in the Red Fort at Delhi, built 1639-48, the crowning glory of the emperor's new capital of Shahjahanabad.

The literary evidence that strongly suggests that Ustad Ahmad was also the architect of the world-famous Taj Mahal was discovered only in the 1930s.[62] Before this evidence came to light, the identity of the Taj's architect was unknown, since the *Padshah Nama* lists only the names of the two government officials placed in charge of the project, namely Makramat Khan and Mir 'Abd al-Karim. Consequently much speculation ensued, and during the nineteenth century, certain Western writers advanced the chauvinistic theory that the Taj Mahal had been designed by a European, either the itinerant Italian craftsman Geronimo Veroneo (d. 1640), or the French goldsmith Augustin de Bordeaux (d. 1632), who was known to have been in the employ of Shah Jahan's father, Jahangir.[63] However, although European influences were strong on Mughal painting, this was not the case with architecture. The Taj Mahal complex clearly stands as the logical culmination of the earlier Mughal architectural tradition, combining bold engineering and massive scale with formal elegance and a totally coordinated design of flawless visual symmetry.

The *Diwan-i-Muhandis* contains a collection of poems written by the architect's son Lutf Allah, in which he mentions that he and his older brother 'Ata Allah and his younger brother Nur Allah had all followed their father's profession and had become

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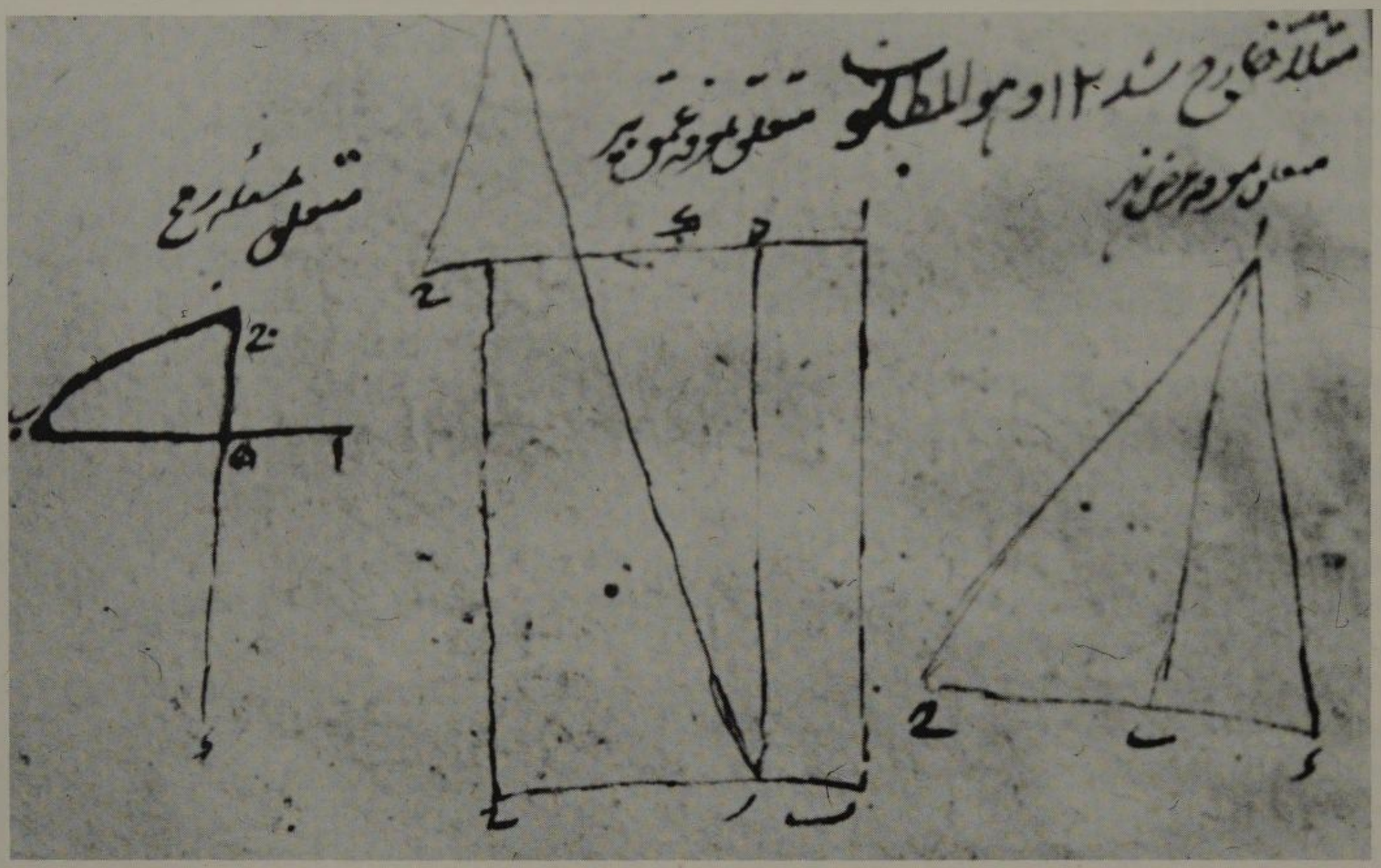
[61] This section has been adapted from the entry by W.E. Begley, "Ustad Ahmad," in *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, 4 vols. (New York, 1982). For more detailed studies, see M.A. Chaghatai, *Ahmad Mi'mar Lahori* (Lahore, 1957); and H.I.S. Kanwar, "Ustad Ahmad Lahori," *Islamic Culture*, 48 (1974), 11-32.

[62] See S. Sulaiman Nadvi, "Lahur ka ek Muhandis Khandan jis ne Taj aur Lal Qil'a Banaya," *Oriental College Magazine*, 14 (1937), 11-50, and the same author's "The Family of the Engineers who Built the Taj Mahal," *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, 34 (1948), 270-284; cf. M.A. Chaghatai, "A Family of Great Mughal Architects," *Islamic Culture*, 11 (1937), 200-209; and Mahmud Bangalori, *Taj* (Lahore, 1951).

[63] The claim that Veroneo was the architect was originally made by the seventeenth-century traveler Manrique, an excerpt from whose 1649 book is included below in chapter 40. Now discredited, the claim was revived in this century by H. Hosten, "Who Planned the Taj?" *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, N.S. 6 (1910), 281-88, and other articles.

architects as well as scholars and engineers. This claim is amply corroborated by numerous surviving mathematical treatises written by two of the brothers.



7. Diagrams from 18th-century manuscript of *Muntakhab al-Hisab*, by Lutf Allah Muhandis, son of Ustad Ahmad Lahori, architect of the Taj Mahal. Former collection, M. A. Chaghatai.

Along with this information, Lutf Allah also includes several verses eulogizing his father's accomplishments, both as a scholar and as an architect. In these, he claims that Shah Jahan commanded his father to build the Taj Mahal as well as the Red Fort, and that:

> These two represent only one aspect of his many-sided genius,
> And constitute just one pearl from his mine of pearls.

Since the *Diwan* of Lutf Allah also contains two chronograms giving the date of his father's death as 1059/1649, we now have a fairly good idea of his important architectural commissions during the last twenty years of his life. However, his earlier life and training are still uncertain. We know that Ustad Ahmad's father was named Yusuf and that the family may have been settled in Herat before shifting to Lahore. After growing up in Lahore, Ustad Ahmad may have worked in the atelier of Mir 'Abd al-Karim, who was the Emperor Jahangir's chief architect and who was subsequently appointed by Shah Jahan to be his superintendent of buildings at Agra.

In the official histories, 'Abd al-Karim is listed as one of the two supervisors of the construction of the Taj, the other being the important noble Makramat Khan, who held the post of minister of public works. Thus, Ustad Ahmad obviously worked closely with these two men during the period 1632-1643 when the Taj complex was

under construction. Although the architect was of lesser rank than Makramat Khan, we know that the two were close friends and associates. According to one source, Mukramat Khan was also a scholar and consented to be the tutor of 'Ata Allah, Ustad Ahmad's eldest son.[64]

When the Taj Mahal was in the planning stage, three enormous Mughal garden tombs were already built or in progress: the tombs of the emperors Humayun, Akbar, and Jahangir. Though based on the first of these, the Taj is much larger in scale and at the same time more balanced in its proportions and more sensitive in the articulation of its vast white marble surfaces. Moreover, the controlled placement of the mausoleum and its subsidiary structures within a garden setting reflects a sophisticated concern for total planning and an interest in visual unity and dramatic vistas comparable to the aesthetic ideals of European baroque architecture.

The engineering aspects of the tomb are no less amazing. First of all, from an analysis of the detailed measurements contained in the Mughal histories it is clear that the plan was laid out on a systematic grid, which allowed the proportional coordination of all the elements of each building, as well as each of the buildings within the entire complex. The width of this grid was exactly 400 Mughal yards (*gaz*), while the total length--from the north edge of the tomb plinth to the southern wall of the caravansarais situated to the south of the complex--is 1,050 yards. By correlation with modern measurements, the length of the Shah Jahani *gaz* seems to have been equivalent to 31.55 inches--very close to the conclusion reached by Hodgson almost 150 years ago.[65] As indicated by the new plans and elevation drawings included in chapter 15, the overall proportions of the complex and the specific locations of certain structures within it appear to have been determined by drawing diagonals across the plan at regular intervals, usually across every square of 100 yards on a side.

Based upon the detailed measurements given in the histories, the dome rises to a total height of 107 Mughal yards (ca. 280 feet) above the ground, while the terrace, supporting the mausoleum and its adjacent structures at the northern end of the garden, consists of a solid block of masonry some 374 Mughal yards (ca. 983 feet) in length, 140 yards (ca. 367 feet) in width, and 20 yards (ca. 50 feet) in height. This latter dimension includes the stone foundation of the brick plinth, which the reconstructed elevation grid indicates was exactly four Mughal yards thick. Since the river Jumna flows along the northern face of this terrace, the architect ingeniously incorporated numerous cylindrical wells into the foundation, thus allowing it to withstand the encroaching effects of annual flooding.[66]

Surprisingly, this vast foundation platform and the mausoleum proper were completed within only about six years after excavation was started in January 1632--including the inlay work on the interior, which was completed by around December 1638. By Zi'l-Hijja 1052/February 1643, the remainder of the tomb complex was also

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[64] See the important article by Nazir Ahmad, "Imam -ud-Din Husain Riadi, the Grandson of Nadir-ul-'Asr, the Architect of the Taj Mahal, and his *Tadhkira-i-Baghistan*," *Islamic Culture*, 30 (1956), 330-350, and 31 (1957), 61-87.

[65] See J.A. Hodgson, "Memoir on the Length of the Illahee Guz, or Imperial Land Measure of Hindostan," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 7 (1843), 42-63; for a recent analysis of the grids of other Mughal buildings, see Attilio Petruccioli, *La Citta del Sole e delle Acque, Fathpur Sikri* (Rome, 1988).

[66] See *Indian Archaeology, A Review*, 1957-58, 83 and pl. cii.

complete, including the garden, the enormous entrance gateway, and the marketplace and caravansarais lying to the south of the entrance forecourt. In some respects, the inlay work on the gateway is even more impressive than that on the mausoleum, since the bold contrast between the red sandstone and bands of white marble allow us to perceive more clearly the innovative dramatic character of its geometric design.

The plan of the Taj is innovative in its placement of the marble mausoleum at one end of the quadripartite garden (*chahar-bagh*) rather than in the exact center as had been the practice previously. By adopting this unusual layout, the architect seems to have been inspired by a then well-known Islamic cosmological diagram depicting the gardens of Paradise on the Day of Resurrection, in an apparent attempt to make each part of the tomb complex correspond allegorically to a celestial architectural model.[67] Paradise imagery was widespread in both literature and art in the Mughal period, and since Ustad Ahmad was a distinguished scholar and intellectual, as well as architect and engineer, he may well have helped conceive the Taj's symbolic program in addition to implementing it structurally.

As mentioned above, Ustad Ahmad's next major commission was the design and construction of the Red Fort in Shah Jahan's new capital at Delhi, the foundations of which were laid at an astrologically auspicious moment on May 12, 1639. By this time, the main structures of the Taj complex had already been completed, so Ustad Ahmad was free to devote all his energies to the new assignment, again under the supervision of Makramat Khan, now promoted to governor of Delhi. The Red Fort was intended to serve as the great ceremonial center of Shah Jahan's vast empire, and European travelers in the mid-seventeenth century described it as one of the largest and most magnificent palace complexes in the world at that time. Within the fortification walls, an imposing array of courtyards, gardens, and palaces were laid out on either side of a central axis passing through the Lahore Gate on the west. The largest of these courtyards lay in front of the Hall of Public Audience, where the emperor daily held court when he was in residence.

Although many of the structures inside the Fort were demolished following the Indian Mutiny of 1857, the Hall of Private Audience survives relatively intact and gives a good idea of the sumptuous elegance of the imperial living quarters. In its design and ornamental details, this building reflects several changes in architectural style since the Taj. Cusped arches have replaced the simple curves on the Taj, and ornament--particularly the foliate motif--has become much more elaborate and three-dimensional, though without sacrificing the continuity of the planar surfaces. On 24 Rabi' II 1058/18 April 1648, Shah Jahan made his first state entry into the recently completed fort, and as a sign of his royal approval, the following couplet was apparently ordered to be inscribed on the interior of the Hall of Private Audience:

> If there be a Paradise on earth,
> It is here, it is here, it is here!

In 1059/1649, just one year after the completion of the Red Fort, Ustad Ahmad died, leaving his three sons to carry on the family profession. Although there is no

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[67] See W.E. Begley, "The Myth of the Taj Mahal and a New Theory of its Symbolic Meaning" (cited above, note 3).

documentary evidence, it is possible that before his death, Ustad Ahmad, in conjunction with his colleague Ustad Hamid, had already prepared the plans for the Jami' Masjid at Delhi (1650-56), the vast congregational mosque that was Shah Jahan's last great architectural project in his new capital.[68] In sum, it appears that the architect Ustad Ahmad played a major role in the formulation and development of Mughal architecture during the reign of Shah Jahan. At once opulent, awe-inspiring, and rigorously formal, his buildings served as perfect expressions of the emperor's exalted image of himself and his empire. They also influenced the course of Indian architecture for the next two centuries.

*The Sons of Ustad Ahmad: 'Ata Allah, Lutf Allah, and Nur Allah*

'Ata Allah, called Rushdi (or Rashidi), was the eldest son of Ustad Ahmad, and was probably born sometime around 1600 or before. Along with his two brothers, Lutf Allah, called Muhandis ("engineer"), and Nur Allah, 'Ata Allah followed in his illustrious father's footsteps and became an architect and scholar of mathematics and geometry. Numerous manuscripts of his treatises on arithmetic and algebra survive, including one translated from Sanskrit in 1044/1634-1635 and dedicated to Emperor Shah Jahan.[69]

'Ata Allah must have collaborated with his father on numerous projects, and only one major monument can be ascribed to him alone. This is the Bibi-ka-Maqbara at Aurangabad, the tomb of Rabi'a Daurani, the wife of Emperor Aurangzeb, who died in 1657. According to its gateway inscription, the tomb was completed in 1071/1660-1661, about four years after the queen's death. The inscription identifies 'Ata Allah as the architect, Haspat Rai as engineer, and Aqa Abu'l-Qasim Beg as the official superintendent of construction.[70]

Ustad Ahmad's second son was Lutf Allah, whose pen-name was "Muhandis." Perhaps born sometime before 1600, he apparently lived to be more than eighty. On the evidence of his *Diwan-i-Muhandis*, which must have been composed not long after 1066/1656, he was an architect, as well as engineer and mathematician. He specifically states that he designed a palace for Shah Jahan's eldest son Dara Shikoh, as well as an apparently elaborate key.[71] While his scholarly abilities are attested to by surviving manuscripts, no buildings designed by him are extant--although some late traditions state that he was closely involved with the construction of the Red Fort at Delhi, obviously working under the supervision of his father Ustad Ahmad. Two inscriptions of his are known, one dating to 1039/1629, during Shah Jahan's third regnal year, and the other to 1070/1659, when he left Shahjahanabad for some reason

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[68] See W.E. Begley, "The Symbolic Role of Calligraphy on Three Imperial Mosques of Shah Jahan," in J. Williams, ed., *Kaladarsana, American Studies in the Art of India* (Delhi, 1981).

[69] This section has been adapted from the entry by W.E. Begley, 'Ata Allah," in *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, 4 vols. (New York, 1982).

[70] Though frequently criticized as an inferior, mannered imitation of the Taj Mahal, the Bibi-ka-Maqbara is in many respects a highly original and innovative building. If 'Ata Allah's design seems cramped and idiosyncratic beside the work of his father, his unusual handling of spatial tension and florid surface ornament nonetheless exerted a strong influence on the development of Mughal architecture in the eighteenth century.

[71] See the articles by Nadvi and Chaghatai, cited above in notes 61, 62.

and made a visit to Mandu--perhaps on his way to Aurangabad, where his elder brother was engaged in completing the tomb of Aurangzeb's wife.

The youngest son of Ustad Ahmad was Nur Allah, about whom very little is known, although Lutf Allah's *Diwan* claims that he was both an architect and skilled calligrapher. His only known work of architectural calligraphy is the long dedication on the facade of Shah Jahan's great congregational mosque at Delhi, the Jami' Masjid, completed in Zi'l-Hijja 1067/September 1656--after six years and at a cost of ten lakhs of rupees.[72] Nur Allah's signature is placed at the end of the tenth inscribed panel on the facade, and reads "Nur Allah, son of Ahmad." Although not mentioned in any seventeenth-century source, it is possible that after the death of Ustad Ahmad, Nur Allah may have assumed some of his late father's architectural responsibilities--including the completion of the Jami' Masjid.

*The Supervisors of Construction, Makramat Khan and Mir 'Abd al-Karim*

Although Makramat Khan was obviously the senior officer in charge of construction, 'Abd al-Karim, called Ma'muri, seems to have been the elder of the two. By 1615, he had already established himself as an architect, working both for Jahangir and Shah Jahan. At the end of 1631, just six months after the death of Mumtaz Mahal, Shah Jahan transferred him from Lahore to Agra; and in 1633, he appointed him to the administrative post of Superintendent of Buildings (*darogha-i-'imarat*) at the capital--probably in recognition of his important contributions to the construction of the Illumined Tomb.

Although few in number, his surviving buildings mark an important stage in the evolution of Mughal architecture from the complicated eclecticism of the period of Akbar to the harmonious refinement of the reign of Shah Jahan. His earliest documented independent project involved remodeling work and construction of new royal palaces at Mandu (1025/1615-1617). As reward for these, Jahangir promoted the architect to noble rank and gave him the title of Ma'mur Khan. One year later 1027/1618, 'Abd al-Karim brought to completion some imposing new palaces in the Lahore fort, which formed part of an extensive renovation project that had been started some six years earlier (under the charge of Jahangir's trusted noble Khwaja Jahan). The architect's most ambitious undertaking in the Lahore fort was the vast white marble Shah Burj, or "Royal Tower," which was begun in 1623 but not completed until 1041/1631, during the fourth regnal year of Shah Jahan.

Thereafter, until his retirement from office in 1056/1646, 'Abd al-Karim functioned as a ranking official in the Mughal bureaucracy, first as a minister (*diwan*) in the Panjab, then as overseer of buildings at Agra. For some unknown reason, his title Ma'mur Khan was dropped and he became known as Mir 'Abd al-Karim instead. It was during his tenure as superintendent of buildings that the Taj Mahal was built, but the histories always mention him as an supervisor, never as the architect. Ustad Ahmad may have been a slightly younger contemporary of 'Abd al-Karim, and may possibly have collaborated with him at Lahore in the 1620s, during the period that the latter was overseer of architecture (*mir-i-'imarat*). Of 'Abd al-Karim's own buildings,

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[72] See Begley, "The Symbolic Role of Calligraphy on Three Imperial Mosques of Shah Jahan," cited above in note 68.

8. Portrait of Makramat Khan, supervisor of construction of the Taj Mahal, standing next to Ja'far Khan; detail of *Shah Jahan Receiving Prince Aurangzeb at Lahore on 15 Ramazan 1049* (9 January 1640). Windsor Castle, Royal Library, *Padshah Nama*, fol. 217v). Copyright Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

the Shah Burj in the Lahore fort most clearly reveals the transitional character of his architectural style and its probable influence upon the mature work of Ustad Ahmad.

The Mughal sources make it clear that Makramat Khan was primarily a skilled administrator, although he undoubtedly possessed sufficient engineering and mathematical knowledge to have played a role in the actual construction as well. Like Amanat Khan, Makramat Khan--whose proper name was Mulla Murshid--was a native of Shiraz; he does not get noticed in the Mughal histories until around Shah Jahan's fourth regnal year. Judging from his apparent age in surviving Mughal portraits, Makramat Khan must have been born around 1570-75; therefore he must have been in his late fifties when he first assumed administrative responsibilities for the construction of the Taj, and more than seventy when he died in 1649--coincidentally the same year that his good friend and colleague Ustad Ahmad also died.

The evidence for the friendship between Makramat Khan and Ustad Ahmad comes from a later literary source, the *Baghistan* of Ustad Ahmad's grandson Riyazi.[73] There it is claimed that Makramat Khan had given instruction to Ustad Ahmad's eldest son 'Ata Allah, perhaps in Lahore, and perhaps around 1610-15, when 'Ata Allah would have been old enough to undertake serious study of mathematics and astronomy--the special areas of Makramat Khan's expertise. The *Baghistan* also claims that Ustad Ahmad's knowledge of these subjects was greater than that of his friend, and that he on occasion defeated Makramat Khan in discussions or debates on technical subjects. From the frequent references to Makramat Khan in the sources, Shah Jahan seems to have placed great trust in him, although the great rewards lavished upon him by the king seem ultimately to have gone to his head. In the *Ma'asir al-Umara*, Makramat Khan is reported to have been quite boastful of his great wealth accumulated during his long years of service to the Emperor, even to the point of saying that "if the city were to be named after him, he would repay into the treasury all that had been spent on its construction."[74]

In connection with Makramat Khan's administration of the construction of the Shahjahanabad fort, one reference in the histories sheds further light on the close involvement of Shah Jahan in virtually every aspect of the design of his numerous architectural projects. In 1056/1646, after he had inspected the covered bazar in Peshawar, which had been recently constructed under the Mughal governor of the Panjab, the Persian noble 'Ali Mardan Khan, Shah Jahan order that its plan be dispatched to Makramat Khan in Delhi, so that its features could be incorporated into the bazar planned for the area between the Lahore gate and the entrance to the great courtyard of the Royal Hall of Public and Private Audience. While Makramat Khan himself may not have drawn any plans, either for the Shahjahanabad fort or the Illumined Tomb, he nonetheless played an extremely important role in his capacity

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[73] See the article by Nazir Ahmad, cited above in note 64; also his forthcoming critical edition of the *Diwan-i-Muhandis*.

[74] See *Ma'asir al-Umara*, Vol. 2, 264-78. Considering the fact that Makramat Khan had administered the supplies for various costly military campaigns, as well as the construction of the Taj Mahal and the Shahjahanabad fort, one wonders whether any of his wealth might have been misappropriated from the huge sums that he handled.

as chief Supervisor of Construction--with one of his tasks evidently being passing the Emperor's emendations on to the actual architect Ustad Ahmad.

*The Trustee of the Tomb, Agah Khan*

Although he was probably not directly involved in the actual construction of the tomb complex, the eunuch Agah Khan played an important role subsequently in his capacity as civil administrator (*faujdar*) of the area around Agra, which included responsibility for the tomb's security, and apparently also its maintenance. Agah Khan was first appointed *faujdar* of the Agra district in 1045/1635; he held this fairly prestigious office for the next seventeen years, until 1063/1653, when he was transferred--because he "had not performed [his duties] well." Although removed as *faujdar*, Agah Khan continued to serve as trustee of the Illumined Tomb; and he also supervised the construction of a small hunting palace on the Jumna in the vicinity of Samughar, a few miles east of Agra. This hunting palace was completed in 1064/1654, at a cost of 80,000 rupees. Three years later, in Rabi' I 1067/December 1657, Agah Khan died, and was replaced as trustee of the Illumined Tomb by the eunuch Mahram Khan, who apparently held the post well into Aurangzeb's reign.

## THE TAJ MAHAL IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPEAN TRAVEL ACCOUNTS

When compared with the detailed, voluminous Mughal sources, the information about the Taj Mahal in the seventeenth-century travel accounts is both scanty and, on important factual matters, unreliable.[75] Although Mundy's mention of the Taj is very brief, his account is perhaps the most valuable, since he was the only European eye-witness to the first years of actual excavation and construction that began early in 1632. Mundy also was in Agra in June 1632, when Shah Jahan returned from Burhanpur after an absence of three years; his sketch of the vast returning cavalcade reveals that he was able to view the Emperor on horseback only from a very great distance, but is nonetheless an important document. The following year, Mundy was still in Agra, and furnishes corroboration of the new gold railing that had been specially installed around the grave on the occasion of the second 'Urs, which, as we know from the Mughal histories, was observed on 17 Zi'l-Qa'da 1043/26 May 1633.[76]

The two most frequently cited European authors are Tavernier and Bernier, neither of whom reached India until several years later. Hence Tavernier's statement, that he "witnessed the commencement . . . of this great work" is completely untrue. It should be noted also that Tavernier's estimate that twenty-two years were required for the Taj's construction conflicts with the unequivocal--and in our view more reliable--statement in the Mughal sources that the entire complex was

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[75] For a brief but outdated overview of the European travelers who came to India during the seventeenth century, see E.F. Oaten, *European Travellers in India during the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries* (London, 1909). Full references to the various editions of accounts by European travelers used in this anthology are cited in the Bibliography.

[76] See R.C. Temple, ed., *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia*, 5 vols. (London 1907-36).

completed within twelve years.[77] Another frequently cited claim of Tavernier, that Shah Jahan had commenced some sort of tomb for himself across the Jumna, is also totally unsupported by the Mughal sources; from observation of the few visible surface remains, some Mughal buildings clearly at one time occupied the site, most probably a garden retreat of some sort, from which the tomb could be viewed from across the river.

If the European sources are generally unreliable in their descriptions of the Taj, their accounts and interpretations of people and events are even more suspect. However, the European travelers do raise one very important issue bearing on the Taj, which seemed important enough to include in this anthology of documentary sources having a bearing on the Taj Mahal. This issue is the allegations made about flaws in the moral character of Shah Jahan, specifically his sensual nature, which some of the European writers claim led him to indiscriminate sexual indulgence, with three of the sources even alleging that Shah Jahan had incestuous relations with his daughter Jahanara following the death of Mumtaz Mahal. It is clear that all of these allegations are based on court gossip and hearsay, but it also clear that such allegations were extremely widespread in the seventeenth century, whether true or not; the incest rumor, for example, had been circulated to Europe by the end of 1631 or beginning of 1632, only about six months after the death of Mumtaz Mahal.[78]

The relevance of these allegations to the Taj is admittedly indirect, but then so is much of the effusive praise of Shah Jahan's nobility and perfect devotion contained in the court histories, which were clearly designed to flatter the Emperor's vanity. For a variety of reasons, the praise of Shah Jahan and the spectacular beauty of the Taj gave rise in the nineteenth century to the highly romantic interpretation of the tomb as a noble embodiment of unparalleled marital devotion--a kind of monument to undying love, as it were.[79] According to this interpretation the aesthetic qualities of the tomb are popularly believed to furnish proof of its builder's intense feeling: for what else but great Love could have inspired such great beauty?

Despite the convoluted rhetoric of the Mughal court histories, it is obvious that their authors were always trying to put the Emperor in the best possible light--whether as an enlightened sovereign or devoted husband. The image of Shah Jahan that emerges in several of the European accounts is quite different. Somewhere between the negative European gossip and the image of perfection painted in the Mughal sources may lie the truth about Shah Jahan and the Illumined Tomb--the search for which is the primary objective of this anthology.

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[77] See V. Ball, transl., *Travels in India by Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, Baron of Aubonne*, 2 vols. (London, 1925). Although in one place Salih mentions that the complex was accomplished over a span of twenty years, elsewhere he cites the same figure of twelve years found in Lahori's account; this suggests that the twenty-year figure is simply a broad estimate, equivalent to saying "two decades" in an approximate sense. The date of 1057/1647 inscribed on the north facade of the Taj's gateway gives a total of sixteen years construction time, and perhaps Salih's approximate figure of twenty years was intended to reflect his awareness of this.

[78] See Vincent Smith, "Joannes De Laet on India and Shah Jahan," *Indian Antiquary*, 43 (1914), 239-44; cf. R.C. Temple, "Shah Jahan and Jahanara," *Indian Antiquary*, 44 (1915), 111-12.

[79] See W.E. Begley, "The Myth of the Taj Mahal and a New Theory of its Symbolic Meaning," *The Art Bulletin*, 61 (1979), 7-37.

# CHRONOLOGY OF THE TAJ MAHAL BASED ON SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY SOURCES

## REIGN OF AKBAR

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Thirty-sixth Regnal Year* | | | |
| Birth of Shah Jahan | 30 Rabi' II | 1000 | 15 January 1592 |
| *Thirty-Eighth Regnal Year* | | | |
| Birth of Mumtaz Mahal | 19 Rajab | 1001 | 15 April 1593 |

## REIGN OF JAHANGIR

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Second Regnal Year* | | | |
| **Betrothal of Shah Jahan to Mumtaz Mahal** | **17 Zi'l-Hijja** | **1015** | **5 April 1607** |
| *Fourth Regnal Year* | | | |
| Marriage to daughter of Mirza Muzaffar Husain Safavi | 21 Rajab | 1019 | 9 October 1610 |
| *Seventh Regnal Year* | | | |
| **Marriage to Mumtaz Mahal** | **9 Rabi' I** | **1021** | **10 May 1612** |
| 'Abd al-Haqq (Amanat Khan) inscription on Tomb of Akbar, Sikandra | | 1022 | 1613 |
| *Eleventh Regnal Year* | | | |
| Architect 'Abd al-Karim awarded title of Ma'mur Khan for Mandu buildings | 29 Safar | 1025 | 18 March 1616 |
| *Twelfth Regnal Year* | | | |
| Marriage to daughter of Shah Nawaz Khan, son of 'Abd al-Rahim Khan Khanam | 2 Ramadan | 1026 | 3 September 1617 |
| *Thirteenth Regnal Year* | | | |
| Ma'mur Khan ('Abd al-Karim) inscription in Lahore Fort | | 1027 | 1618 |

## REIGN OF SHAH JAHAN

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *First Regnal Year* | | | |
| Accession of Shah Jahan at Agra | 8 Jumada II | 1037 | 14 February 1628 |
| *Second Regnal Year* | | | |
| "Muhandis" inscription at Peshawar | | 1039 | 1629 |
| *Fourth Regnal Year* | | | |
| Makramat Khan, Minister of Royal Works (*Diwan-i-Buyutat*), rank 1,000/600 | 1 Rajab | 1040 | 3 March 1631 |
| 'Abd al-Haqq (Amanat Khan) escorts Persian ambassador to Burhanpur | 18 Sha'ban | 1040 | 22 March 1631 |
| **Death of Mumtaz Mahal at Burhanpur, temporary burial in Zainabad garden** | **17 Zi'l-Qa'da** | **1040** | **17 June 1631** |
| Shah Jahan visits grave in Zainabad garden | 25 Zi'l-Qa'da | 1040 | 25 June 1631 |
| First Rosewater festival after death | 4 Zi'l-Hijja | 1040 | 4 July 1631 |
| 'Abd al-Karim inscription on Shah Burj, Lahore | | 1041 | 1631-32 |
| 'Abd al-Karim transferred to Agra | Jumada I | 1041 | December 1631 |
| **Body of Mumtaz Mahal taken from Burhanpur to Agra** | **17 Jumada I** | **1041** | **11 December 1631** |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Fifth Regnal Year* | | | |
| **Body of Mumtaz Mahal reburied at Agra** | **15 Jumada II** | **1041** | **8 January 1632** |
| Shah Shuja' returns from Agra to Burhanpur | 4 Rajab | 1041 | 26 January 1632 |
| Mundy witnesses Shah Jahan's cavalcade arrive at Agra | 23 Zi'l-Qa'da | 1041 | 11 June 1632 |
| Shah Jahan in Dehra Bagh at Agra; Makramat Khan promoted to rank 1,500/600; 'Abd al-Haqq awarded title of Amanat Khan, rank 900/200 | 1 Zi'l-Hijja | 1041 | 19 June 1632 |
| **First 'Urs in court of new grave** | **4? Zi'l-Hijja** | **1041** | **22? June 1632** |
| **Farman to Raja Jai Singh, to expedite marble supply** | **5 Rabi' I** | **1042** | **20 September 1632** |
| *Sixth Regnal Year* | | | |
| 'Abd al-Karim designated Superintendent of Buildings | 22 Rajab | 1042 | 2 February 1633 |
| **Farman to Raja Jai Singh, to send 230 carts of marble** | **23 Sha'ban** | **1042** | **3 February 1633** |
| Makramat Khan, also superintendent of astronomers | 8 Sha'ban | 1042 | 18 February 1633 |
| Mundy departs Agra for Surat, accompanied by Geronimo Veroneo; mention of gold railing installed around grave, establishment of "Taj Ganj" near Tomb, and leveling of surrounding terrain | 22 Sha'ban | 1042 | 4 March 1633 |
| **Second 'Urs on foundation of new tomb, gold railing installed around grave** | **17 Zi'l-Qa'da** | **1042** | **26 May 1633** |
| Amanat Khan promoted to rank 1,000/100 | 26 Muharram | 1043 | 2 August 1633 |
| **Farman to Raja Jai Singh, awarding exchange properties** | **26 Jumada II** | **1043** | **28 December 1633** |
| *Seventh Regnal Year* | | | |
| 'Abd al-Karim promoted to rank 1,000/200 | 23 Rajab | 1043 | 23 January 1634 |
| Mention of Third 'Urs on trip to Kashmir | Zi'l-Qa'da | 1043 | May 1634 |
| **Mention of architect Ustad Ahmad, "Wonder of the Age" (Nadir al-'Asr), in preface to treatise by 'Ata Allah** | | **1044** | **1634-35** |
| *Eighth Regnal Year* | | | |
| Fourth 'Urs | 17 Zi'l-Qa'da | 1044 | 4 May 1635 |
| **Amanat Khan inscription inside Tomb** | | **1045** | **1635-36** |
| *Ninth Regnal Year* | | | |
| Inscriptions of Amanat Khan on Madrasa Shahi mosque | | 1045-46 | (June?) 1636 |
| Dated inscription on new palaces inside Agra Fort | | 1046 | (December?) 1636 |
| **Dated inscription on Tomb exterior, west door** | | **1046** | **1036-37** |
| Shah Jahan visits Tomb before Sixth 'Urs | 25 Ramadan | 1046 | 11 February 1637 |
| Sixth 'Urs | 17 Zi'l-Qa'da | 1046 | 13 April 1637 |
| *Tenth Regnal Year* | | | |
| **Farman to Raja Jai Singh, not to delay marble supply** | **7 Safar** | **1047** | **1 July 1637** |
| *Eleventh Regnal Year* | | | |
| **Award to Amanat Khan for calligraphy inside Tomb** | **1 Sha'ban** | **1047** | **19 December 1637** |
| Seventh 'Urs | 17 Zi'l-Qa'da | 1047 | 1 April 1638 |
| Makramat Khan now appointed Majordomo (*Mir Saman*); 'Abd al-Karim promoted to rank 1,500/200 | 1 Rabi' II | 1048 | 12 August 1638 |
| *Twelfth Regnal Year* | | | |
| **Amanat Khan inscription inside Tomb** | | **1048** | **(December?) 1638** |
| Death of Afzal Khan at Lahore | 12 Ramadan | 1048 | 17 January 1638 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Amanat Khan and sons received by Shah Jahan at Lahore; promoted to 1,000/200; son 'Inayat Allah appointed Reviser of Petitions | 16 Ramadan 1048 | 21 January 1639 |
| **Foundations begun for Shahjahanabad Fort, designed by Ustad Ahmad and Ustad Hamid** | **25 Zi'l-Hijja 1048** | **29 April 1639** |
| *Fourteenth Regnal Year* | | |
| Amanat Khan inscription on his sarai near Amritsar | 1050 | 1640-41 |
| Tavernier's first recorded arrival in Agra | late 1050 | end 1640 |
| Death of Geronimo Veroneo in Lahore (later buried at Agra) | late 1050 | end 1640 |
| Manrique visits Agra; describes Tomb, still under construction; claims Veroneo as architect | Ramadan 1050 | January 1641 |
| *Fifteenth Regnal Year* | | |
| Makramat Khan appointed governor of Delhi, in charge of construction of new fort; rank 3,000/3,000 | 23 Jumada II 1051 | 29 September 1641 |
| *Sixteenth Regnal Year* | | |
| **Twelfth 'Urs, completion of tomb complex, supervision of Makramat Khan and 'Abd al-Karim** | **17 Zi'l-Qa'da 1052** | **6 February 1643** |
| *Seventeenth Regnal Year* | | |
| Thirteenth 'Urs | 17 Zi'l-Qa'da 1053 | 27 January 1644 |
| *Eighteenth Regnal Year* | | |
| Death of Amanat Khan | 1054-55 | 1644-45 |
| Fourteenth 'Urs | 17 Zi'l-Qa'da 1054 | 15 January 1645 |
| Shah Jahan halts at Sarai Amanat Khan | 1 Safar 1055 | 29 March 1645 |
| Makramat Khan promoted to rank 4,000/4,000 | 12 Jumada I 1055 | 6 July 1645 |
| *Nineteenth Regnal Year* | | |
| Plans of Peshawar covered bazar sent to Makramat Khan at Delhi, for use in fort under construction | 6 Rabi' II 1056 | 21 April 1646 |
| *Twentieth Regnal Year* | | |
| Death of Satti al-Nisa Khanam | 24 Zi'l-Hijja 1056 | 31 January 1647 |
| **Dated inscription on Tomb gateway, north arch** | **1057** | **1647** |
| *Twenty-First Regnal Year* | | |
| **Royal inauguration of Shahjahanabad Fort, built by Ustad Ahmad and Ustad Hamid; promotion of Makramat Khan to rank of 5,000/5,000** | **24 Rabi' II 1058** | **18 April 1648** |
| *Twenty-Second Regnal Year* | | |
| **Burial of Satti al-Nisa Khanam at Tomb complex** | **early 1059** | **early 1049** |
| Grant from Tomb treasury to Abu Sa'id, grandson of I'timad al-Daula | 28 Rabi' II 1059 | 15 April 1649 |
| **Death of architect Ustad Ahmad** | **1059** | **1649** |
| *Twenty-Third Regnal Year* | | |
| Death of Makramat Khan | Zi'l-Qa'da 1059 | November 1649 |
| Lutf Allah Muhandis builds palace for Dara Shikoh | 1060 | 1650 |
| *Twenty-Sixth Regnal Year* | | |
| **Aurangzeb letter about repairs needed at Tomb** | **8 Muharram 1063** | **9 December 1652** |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Completion of Moti Masjid, Agra Fort | Jumada I | 1063 | April | 1653 |
| *Twenty-Seventh Regnal Year* | | | | |
| Agah Khan completes royal lodge on Jumna, east of Agra | Muharram | 1064 | November | 1653 |
| Grant from Tomb treasury to Murad Bakhsh | 1 Rabi' II | 1064 | 19 February | 1654 |
| Lutf Allah's chronogram for marriage of Sulaiman Shikoh | | 1064 | | 1654 |
| *Twenty-Eighth Regnal Year* | | | | |
| Manucci first visits Agra | Rajab | 1064 | June | 1654 |
| Royal visit to Tomb, during brief excursion to inspect Moti Masjid in Agra Fort | 17 Safar | 1065 | 27 December | 1654 |
| *Twenty-Ninth Regnal Year* | | | | |
| Lutf Allah designs key for Dara Shikoh | | 1066 | | 1656 |
| *Thirtieth Regnal Year* | | | | |
| Completion of Jami' Masjid at Delhi, inscription of Nur Allah, son of Ustad Ahmad | Zi'l-Hijja | 1067 | September | 1656 |
| Death of eunuch Agah Khan, trustee of Tomb; Mahram Khan appointed new trustee | 9 Rabi' I | 1067 | 26 December | 1657 |

## REIGN OF AURANGZEB

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *First Regnal Year* | | | | |
| Bernier first visits Agra | | 1069 | | 1659 |
| Lutf Allah inscription at Mandu, mentioning Ustad Ahmad | 9 Rabi' I | 1070 | 24 December | 1659 |
| *Second Regnal Year* | | | | |
| 'Ata Allah inscription on Aurangabad tomb of Aurangzeb's wife, Rabi'a Daurani | | 1071 | | 1661 |
| *Sixth Regnal Year* | | | | |
| Bernier's description of Tomb complex | Zi'l-Hijja | 1073 | July | 1663 |
| *Eighth Regnal Year* | | | | |
| Tavernier's description of Tomb complex | Jumada I | 1076 | November | 1665 |
| Illness of Shah Jahan | 11 Rajab | 1076 | 17 January | 1666 |
| **Death and Burial of Shah Jahan** | **26 Rajab** | **1076** | **31 January** | **1066** |
| *Twentieth Regnal Year* | | | | |
| Death of Akbarabadi Mahal, wife of Shah Jahan | 4 Zi'l-Hijja | 1088 | 7 February | 1677 |
| *Twenty-Fifth Regnal Year* | | | | |
| Death of Jahanara, daughter of Shah Jahan | 3 Ramadan | 1092 | 16 September | 1681 |

# PART I
# THE TAJ MAHAL IN MUGHAL HISTORIES

9. Portrait of Shah Jahan, probably during eleventh regnal year, 1047-48 (1637-38). Oxford, Bodleian Library.

# 1

# THE MARRIAGES OF SHAH JAHAN

[The following extracts furnish details on all three of Shah Jahan's marriages, as related both in the memoirs of the emperor Jahangir and in the court history by Qazwini, which presents the fullest account of Shah Jahan's princehood. In December 1609, he married the daughter of Muzaffar Husain Mirza, who was descended from Shah Isma'il Safavi. Although Shah Jahan had been betrothed to Mumtaz Mahal--daughter of Asaf Khan and granddaughter of Jahangir's Prime Minister, I'timad al-Daula--in April 1607, when he was barely fifteen years old, the marriage was not performed until May 1612. His third wife, whom he married in Burhanpur in September 1617, was the daughter of Shah Nawaz Khan, son of the powerful noble 'Abd al-Rahim Khan Khanan.

[The histories refer to two of Shah Jahan's consorts as Akbarabadi Mahal and Fatehpuri Mahal--presumably his first wife, also known as Qandahari Begam, and his third wife, although this is not certain. Both consorts built buildings at Delhi and Agra, and a tomb at Agra called Qandahari Bagh may be that of Akbarabadi Mahal, who died in 1086/1677. The death date and place of burial of Fatehpuri Mahal is unknown, but it seems unlikely that she would have been buried in the so-called tomb of Sirhindi Begam, whose identity is still unknown.]

## BETROTHAL OF SHAH JAHAN TO MUMTAZ MAHAL

### 1.1. QAZWINI

**[fol. 43a]** THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD-ILLUMINATION OF THE KING OF LOFTY FORTUNE, THE BETROTHAL OF THE LADY, HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN (*NAWWAB MAHD-'ULYA*), MUMTAZ AL-ZAMANI TO HIS MAJESTY, AND HIS APPOINMENT TO THE POST OF MASTER OF CORRESPONDENCE (*SAHIB-I-RISALAGI-I-KUL*), AND OTHER EVENTS.

When the truth-recording pen gathers auspiciousness with the mention of the Lady Mumtaz al-Zamani, the second Maryam, it first makes the narration of her noble lineage the heading-ornament of the account.

That holy-natured one of angelic character is the daughter of pure lineage of the pride of the nobles of magnificent pomp and grandeur, the support of the caliphate, Yamin al-Daula Asaf Khan, the fortunate son of the greatest minister Ghiyas Beg, entitled I'timad al-Daula, son of Khwaja Muhammad Sharif Razi. The mother of the said Khwaja was a Sayyida from the family of the Sayyids of Rayy, the genuineness of whose pedigree (*nisbat*) has been attested from generation to generation. And the grandmother of that khan of Asaf-like qualities was also a Sayyida from among the clan of the Bani-Mukhtar Sayyids, of the glorious stature and eminence of whose dignity the Arabic proverb, "*Heaven is for the Almighty and the earth for the Bani-Mukhtar*," is a perfect indication; and she was closely related to Mir Shams al-Din 'Ali Sabzwari, who was the chief leader of the great men and elite of Khurasan and one of the celebrated persons of the time.

The mother of Mumtaz al-Zamani was the fortune-starred daughter of Mirza Ghiyas al-Din 'Ali Qazwini, entitled Asaf Khan, who was adorned with the ornament of ability and capability and had held the office of Lord Chancellor *(Mir Bakhshi)* during the reign of His Majesty 'Arsh Ashyani [Akbar]; he had enjoyed such complete trust and authority, that through his intermediary, his brother's son, Ja'far

Beg Asaf Khan, **[fol. 43b]** made the journey to Hindustan in company with his entire family, and obtained high positions and worthy ranks at court.

In short, His Majesty Jannat Makani [Jahangir], who, with his illuminating intelligence, possessed clear knowledge of the inked letters inscribed [by Destiny] on the foreheads of people, and who accordingly could determine their futures from the pages of their foreheads, since he observed the lustre of happy fortune and worthiness on the shining forehead of that second Maryam, Mumtaz al-Zamani, he found that bright Venus of the sphere of chastity to be worthy of conjunction with that Auspicious Star of the sky of fortune [Shah Jahan].

Therefore, in the Nauroz days of the second year of the auspicious Jahangiri accession, which was the commencement year of the spring of fortune and sovereignty of His Majesty the King [Shah Jahan], he conceived the idea, in the Abode of Sovereignty, Lahore, of grafting that rose of the garden of chastity and perfection with that fresh bush of the orchard of dignity and pomp. And at a time, as auspicious as the advent of Nauroz and at an hour as blessed as the Sharaf-i-Aftab, having imparted to the mother of Yamin al-Daula Asaf Khan the good tidings of the happiness of both the worlds by giving expression to this matter, which would be one of the great heavenly gifts and magnificent divine presents, he asked her to produce that pearl of the casket of chastity in the inner apartments (*haram-sara*) of the Royal Palace for the sake of the ceremony of betrothal with that Star of the constellation of sovereignty [Shah Jahan].

And that wise Lady of the women of the time and the model of the ladies of the world, realizing that the graft of the bush of the orchard of chastity with the tree of the gardens of the caliphate would bear fruits of great fortune and bounty, and the conjunction of the star of the sky of good luck with the luminary of the constellation of sovereignty would yield honor and happiness, in compliance with the orders of the Emperor Jannat Makani, whose sound and perfect judgment had desired and wished that conjunction of Venus and Jupiter and that union of the sun and moon, made the Lady Mumtaz al-Zamani, whose august age at that time was fourteen years, four months and twenty-three days, the recipient of everlasting fortune by bringing her to make her obeisance [lit., kiss the carpet] before that Solomon-like king on the 16th of the month of Farwardin of the said year, corresponding to the 7th of Zi'l-Hijja of the year 1015 [5 April 1607].

And His Majesty Jannat-Makani, having received her auspicious arrival with honor and respect, turned that heavenly assembly into the highest paradise through the blossoming of the garden of courtesy and blooming of the flowers of kindness. **[fol. 44a]** And in a manner which befits the monarchs of pomp and glory, having performed the ceremony of betrothal, he embellished with the ring of luck the happy and fortunate finger of that worthy lady [*banu-i-arjumand*, an allusion to her name].

## MARRIAGE OF SHAH JAHAN TO THE DAUGHTER OF MIRZA MUZAFFAR HUSAIN SAFAVI

1.2. *TUZUK-I-JAHANGIRI*

**[I, p. 159]** On Sunday, the 15th of Ramazan 1018 [12 December 1609], I sent 50,000 rupees as wedding gift (*sachaq*) to the house of the daughter of Muzaffar

Husain Mirza, son of Sultan Husain Mirza, son of Bahram Mirza, son of Shah Isma'il Safavi, who had been demanded in marriage for my son Khurram [Shah Jahan]. . . .

**[p. 180]** Previously to this, I had the daughter of Mirza Muzaffar Husain, son of Sultan Husain Mirza Safavi, ruler of Qandahar, betrothed to my son Sultan Khurram, and on this date, the 17th of Aban [21 Rajab 1019/9 October 1610], as the marriage meeting had been arranged, I went to the house of Baba Khurram and passed the night there. I presented most of the Amirs with robes of honor.

## 1.3. QAZWINI

**[fol. 45a]** THE LATE EMPEROR JANNAT-MAKANI'S ASKING IN MARRIAGE THE FORTUNE-STARRED DAUGHTER OF MIRZA MUZAFFAR HUSAIN SAFAVI FOR HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF LOFTY FORTUNE, AND THE OCCURRENCE OF THE NUPTIALS AND MARRIAGE OF THESE TWO LUMINARIES OF THE ZENITH OF GOOD FORTUNE

In the fourth auspicious Jahangiri year of accession, the late Emperor Jannat-Makani sought in marriage for His Majesty the King of lofty fortune the daughter of good stars, that choice one of the family of the Chosen One [Prophet Muhammad Mustafa] and that elite one of the house of the Selected One ['Ali Murtaza], Muzaffar Husain Safavi, who was the rich pearl of the ocean of Sayyidhood and nobility and the resplendent star of the sky of honor and fortune.

[On the 21st of] the auspicious month of Rajab of the year 1019 Hijri [9 October 1610], corresponding to 17th Aban **[fol. 45b]** of the fifth Jahangiri year, when His Highness had attained to his twentieth lunar year, a festive assembly was arranged in the mansion encompassed by divine bounties of Maryam al-Zamani, the noble mother of His Majesty Jannat Makani which was adjacent to the Royal Palace (*daulat-khana*) and had previously belonged to Maryam-Makani, the most august mother of His Majesty 'Arsh Ashyani [Akbar], and the marriage-assembly was held at an auspicious hour and a happy moment and a nuptial feast and a banquet of joy and pleasure were arranged. After the conjunction of those two luminaries of the zenith of happiness and felicity, His Majesty Jannat Makani took the trouble to grace the residence of His Majesty the King, which is situated inside the fort adjacent to the Royal Palace, and which had lately taken on the appearance of the celestial garden of the houris, on account of the construction and furnishing of attractive edifices and faultless villas (*qusur*); and for one night and day, he adorned the assembly of joy and pleasure and decorated the banquet of delight and cheerfulness. His Majesty the King, having spread carpets from the lofty royal audience hall to the special seat (*nashiman*) in his own palace that had been allotted for the late Emperor, who now has his residence in the empyrean and his abode in Paradise, presented by way of *peshkash* offering costly gifts comprising jewels, studded utensils and rich stuffs. And through [the late Emperor's] kindness and consideration, everything had the honor of royal acceptance.

## MARRIAGE OF SHAH JAHAN TO MUMTAZ MAHAL

### 1.4. *TUZUK-I-JAHANGIRI*

**[I, p. 224]** As I had sought the daughter of I'tiqad Khan [Asaf Khan], son of I'timad al-Daula, in marriage for Khurram, and the marriage festival had already been held, I went on Thursday, the 18th of Khurdad [6 Rabi' II 1021/6 June 1612], to his house and stayed there one day and one night. And Khurram presented offerings to me, and he gave jewels to the Begams, his mother and stepmothers, and to the female servants of the harem, and dresses of honor to the Amirs.

### 1.5. QAZWINI

**[fol. 48b]** THE NUPTIALS AND MARRIAGE OF THE LADY, HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN (*NAWWAB MAHD-'ULYA*), MUMTAZ AL-ZAMANI, WITH HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF LOFTY FORTUNE.

Since perfect wisdom, which adorns the chamber of the moon and the sun in the nine porches of the gilded sphere, had demanded that, in the firmament of existence, when happy stars become conjoined with auspicious planets, each happy Jupiter should seek union with a Venus-faced one, and every sun of honor should select the love of a moon-faced one so that the conjunction of their union may yield the fruits of honor and happiness.

Consequently, when from the age of His Majesty the King of lofty fortune, twenty lunar years, eleven months and nine days had elapsed; and the noble age of the Lady Mumtaz al-Zamani had attained nineteen years, seven months and twenty-five days, and a period of five years, three months and two days had elapsed from the date of their betrothal, the late Emperor Jannat Makani, the luster of whose mind **[fol. 49a]** was the sun of the day of fortune and the moon of the night of happiness, took upon his own august self the charge of arranging the banquet-feast of the marriage of that worthy groom of the family of creation. And having obtained various articles of gold, jewels, stuffs and so forth, as well as other precious things considered worthy of and befitting this occasion, he made arrangement for the means of festivity and the requisites of joy and pleasure on such a scale as befits the emperors (*khaqan*) of very great grandeur. On the night of Friday, the 9th of the month of Rabi' I of the year 1021 Hijri [10 May 1612], corresponding to the 22nd of the month of Urdibihisht of the seventh year of the Jahangiri accession:

At a time when the ascendant star was favorable,
The eyes deserved meeting each other,

the nuptial ceremony (*nikah*) of that Bilqis of the Age with that Solomon of the Time was held. And on that auspicious night, from which the Night of Power (*Shab-i-Qadr*) and Night of Allotment (*Shab-i-Barat*) could derive glory and honor, the lights of the lamp-festival of the stars and the illuminations of torches and lanterns shone respectively on the earth and on the sky:

A night brighter than the day of youth,
Adding to pleasurable delight and fulfillment of desire.

Thus that couch of fortune and that litter of magnificence of the Lady Mumtaz al-Zamani had the honor of arrival at the house of honor of the sun of the sphere of sovereignty; and that moon of the sky and chastity became the associate of eternal happiness by conjunction with the auspicious star of the firmament of the caliphate.

And when the two luminaries of the zenith of glory and beauty had their conjunction in one constellation, they embellished the bedchamber of fortune and auspiciousness. The celestial fathers [the stars] scattered over them gems from the casket of the Pleiades and pearls from their neighboring constellations. And the earthly mothers [i.e., the four elements] brought as presents for the bridal unveiling (*ru-numa*) costly products of mines and quarries and the choicest harvest of the Garden of Eden. The holy ones of the celestial spheres and the residents of the earth's expanse loosened the tongue of congratulations and well-wishing. The sound of the drum of festivity and the clarion of joy made the revolving spheres dance, while the lady musician Venus, sounding her harp (*qanun*) from within the curtain (*parda*), performed songs of joy and pleasure.

And the table-decker of bounty spread forth varied delicacies from the seven lands [i.e., the seven places between Iran and Turan crossed by Rustam]; and from the repository of bounteous gifts (*khil'at-khana*) robes of honor of gold-embroidered cloth and brocade were bestowed on great and small and old and young.

Due to the utmost attention and care **[fol. 49b]** which His Majesty Jannat Makani displayed for ensuring the grandeur of that most illustrious and glorious occasion, before the performance of the auspicious and fortunate marriage ceremony, he graced with his visit the house of Yamin al-Daula Asaf Khan, who was at that time entitled I'tiqad Khan, and for one night and day he illumined the assembly of that feast of joy and pleasure. And after a few days, when that auspicious festive occasion and blessed function had concluded, he again embellished with the dignity of his arrival the Paradise-like residence of His Majesty the King of lofty fortune, in the company of all the veiled ladies from behind the curtains of chastity and the concealed ones from the mansion of sovereignty, on account of the great joy and pleasure he felt at this conjunction of two auspicious planets. And when the late Emperor had graced with his arrival that assembly of joy and fulfillment of desire and illuminated that convival meeting (*mahfil*) of cheerfulness and delight in that abode of recreation, His Majesty the King of lofty fortune, performed the *pa-andaz* ceremony of reception [spreading mats and scattering coins], and presented a *peshkash* offering of peerless jewels and heart-pleasing stuffs and precious objects to his father, now having the empyrean as his throne, and everything met with his kind approval [lit., was approved by his eye of kindness].

And after the nuptials and marriage, in accordance with the custom and practice of the rulers of this house of the Caliphate, who, when they wish to distinguish with greater honor one from among those who grace the royal bedchamber of fortune, bestow an appropriate title, His Majesty the King of lofty fortune, finding that incomparable Lady, whose auspicious real name was Arjumand Banu Begam, to be of weighty dignity in the balance of capability and of perfect assay against the

touchstone of experience; and finding also, in respect of her appearance of beauty, that she was chief and elect (*mumtaz*) from among the women of the time and the ladies of the universe, he gave her the title Mumtaz Mahal Begam, so that it may on the one hand serve as an indication of the pride and glory of that select one of the age, and on the other, that the real illustrious name of that reputed one of this world and the hereafter, befittingly may not occur on the tongues of the common people. And in this book of auspicious contents, she shall be mentioned either as Her Majesty the Queen (*Mahd-'Ulya*), or as Mumtaz al-Zamani.

### 1.6. *TUZUK-I-JAHANGIRI*

*Jahangir's Reaction to the Death of Shah Shah's Eldest Child by Mumtaz Mahal, Princess Hur al-Nisa*

**[I, pp. 326-28]** On the [26th] of Khurdad [29 Jumada I 1025/14 June 1616], an event occurred such that, although I was greatly desirous of writing it down, my hand and heart have failed me. Whenever I took my pen, my state became bewildered, and I helplessly ordered I'timad al-Daula to write it.

"This long-time sincere servant, I'timad al-Daula, by order writes in this auspicious volume that on the 11th of Khurdad [31 May 1616], the traces of fever were seen in the pure daughter of Shah Khurram of lofty fortune [Hur al-Nisa], for whom His Majesty showed much affection as the early fruit of the garden of auspiciousness. After three days, pustules (*abila*) appeared, and on the 26th of the same month, corresponding with Wednesday, the 29th of Jumada I of the year 1025, the bird of her soul flew from her elemental cage and passed into the gardens of Paradise. And from this date, an order was given that Wednesday (*char-shamba*) should be called the "lost day" (*kam-shamba*).

"What shall I write as to what happened to the pure personality of the shadow of God, in consequence of this heartburning event and grief-increasing calamity? Inasmuch as it happened after this manner to that soul of the world, what must be the condition of those other servants whose life was bound up with that pure personality.

"For two days, the servants were not received in audience, and an order was given that a wall should be built in front of the house which had been the abode of that bird of paradise, so that it might not be seen. In addition to this, he did not adorn [with his presence] the threshold of the hall of audience. On the third day, he went in an agitated state to the house of the illustrious prince, and the servants had the good fortune to pay their salutations and found fresh life. On the way, however much His Majesty desired to control himself, the tears flowed from the auspicious eyes. And for a long time it happened thus, that at the mere hearing of some word reminding him of her death [lit., carrying a whiff of that pain], His Majesty's state became bewildered.

"He remained for some days in the house of that prince of the inhabitants of the world, and on Monday, [the 6th] of the divine month of Tir [11 Jumada II 1025/26 June 1616], he went to the house of Asaf Khan, and turned back thence to the Chasma-i-Nur, and for two or three days engaged himself there. But as long as he remained in Ajmer, he could not control himself. Whenever the word 'friendship'

reached his ear, the tears would drop from his eyes unrestrained, and the hearts of his faithful followers were torn in pieces. When the departure of the cavalcade of fortune to the province of the Deccan took place, he gained a little composure."

## MARRIAGE OF SHAH JAHAN TO THE DAUGHTER OF SHAH NAWAZ KHAN, SON OF 'ABD AL-RAHIM KHAN KHANAM

### 1.7. QAZWINI

**[fol. 72b]** THE SEEKING IN MARRIAGE, BY HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF LOFTY FORTUNE, OF THE FORTUNE-STARRED DAUGHTER OF SHAH NAWAZ KHAN, AT THE BEHEST OF THE LATE EMPEROR MAJESTY JANNAT-MAKANI, FOR ASSUAGING THE FEELINGS OF KHAN KHANAN, AND INSPIRING HIS ENTHUSIASM AND DEDICATION IN SERVICE; AND SOME OTHER EVENTS.

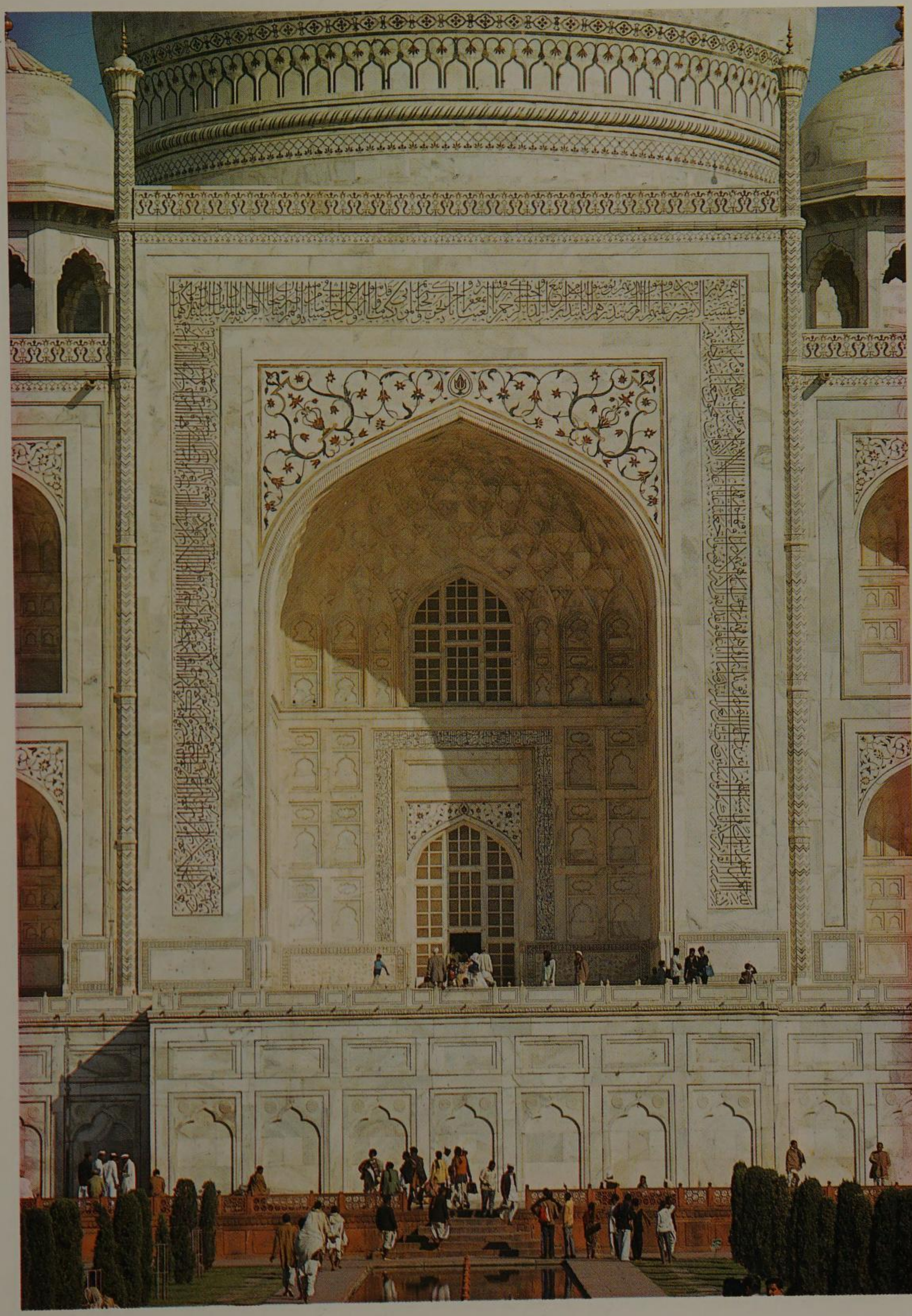
[On the 2nd of] the month of Ramadan of this very year of auspicious omen, 1026 [3 September 1617], His Majesty the King of lofty fortune, at the orders of his Solomon-ranked father, brought the daughter of pure lineage of Shah Nawaz Khan, son of Khan Khanan, into the bond of matrimony through a religion-sanctioned marriage ceremony (*nikah*). And for honoring [lit., raising the head of] Khan Khanan, he graced his house with his arrival, and embellished the banquet of festivity; and having thrown open the doors of generosity and bounty to the face of the people of the world, he placed the fulfillment of the heart's desire into the bosom of the world.

### 1.8. *TUZUK-I-JAHANGIRI*

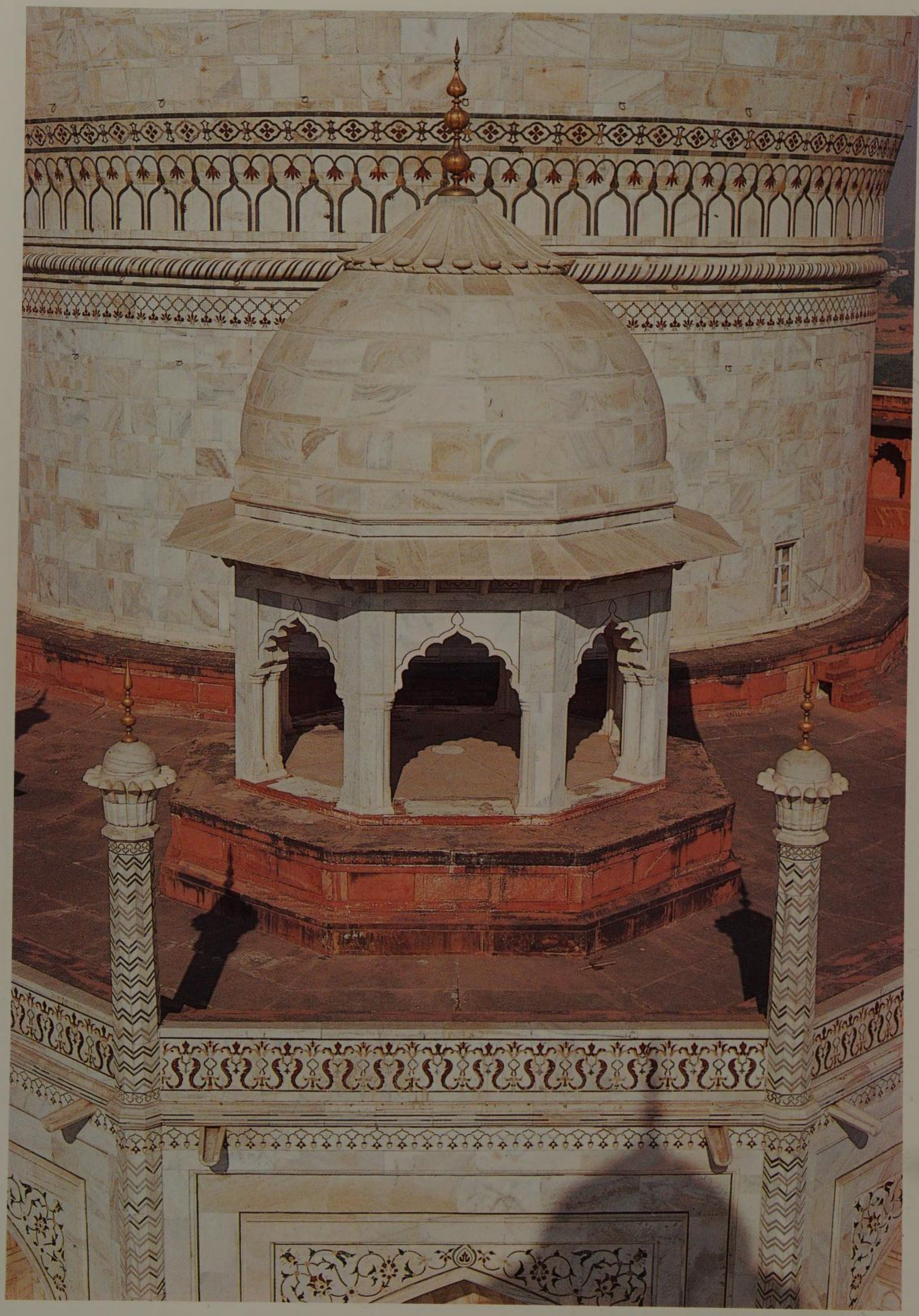
*Mention by Jahangir of an Illness of Prince Shah Shuja' and the Death of Shah Jahan's Son by the Daughter of Shah Nawaz Khan, Prince Jahan Afroz*

**[II, p. 203]** In these days [Rabi' II 1030/March 1620], Shah Shuja' had an eruption so violent that water would not go down his throat, and his life was despaired of. As it had been recorded in his father's horoscope that his son would die this year, all the astrologers were unanimous that he would not live, but Jotik Ray said, on the contrary, that the dust of calamity would not settle on the skirt of his life. I asked, "By what proof?" He said that in the horoscope of my destiny, it was recorded that in this year, no distress or trouble would find its way to the royal mind from any road, and as I had a great affection for the child, it behoved that no calamity should happen to him, and some other child would die.

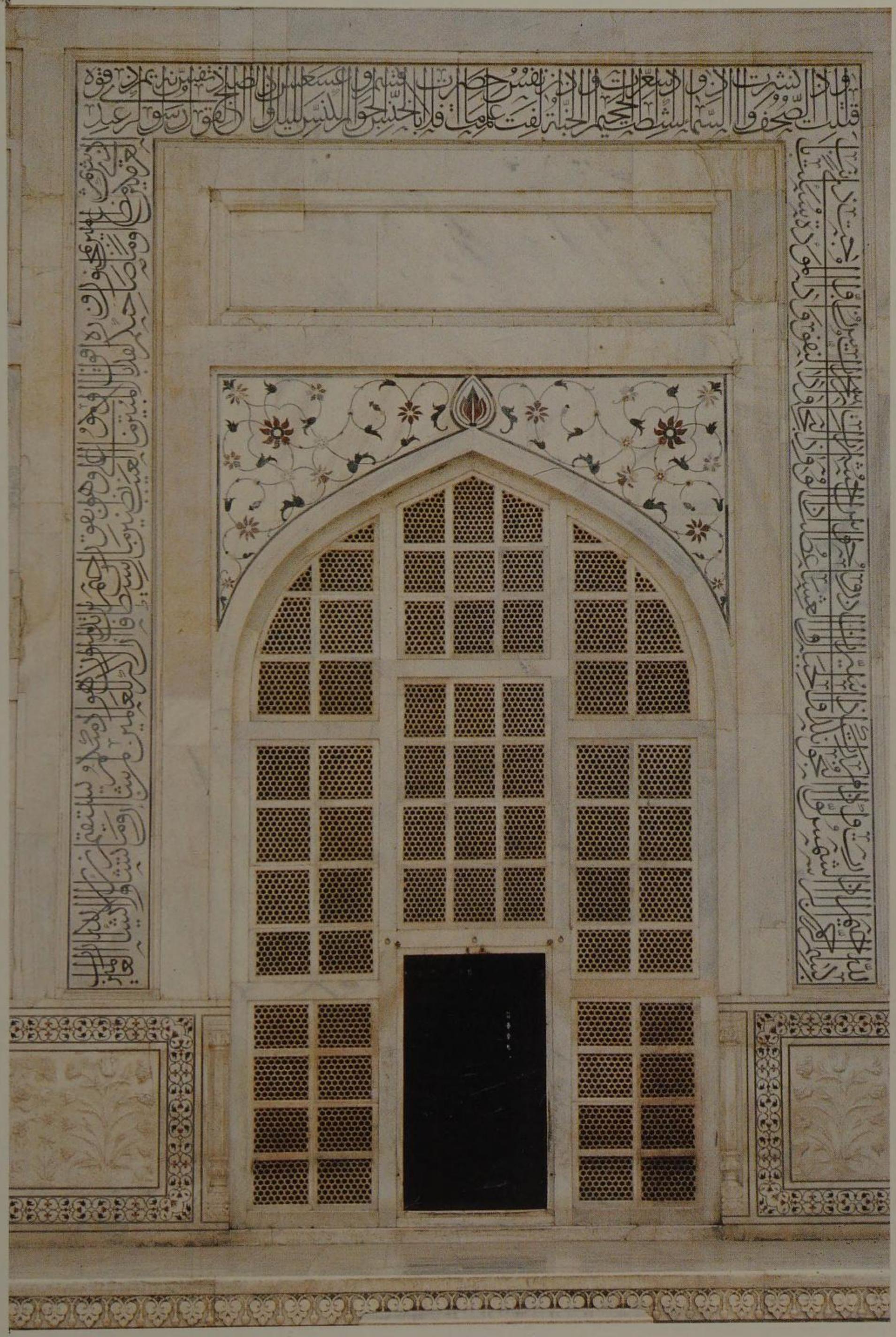
It came to pass as he said, and he carried his life out of this deadly place, while a son [Sultan Afroz] that [Shah Jahan] had by the daughter of Shah Nawaz Khan died at Burhanpur.



I. Taj Mahal, south arch of tomb, inscribed with Sura 36 *Ya Sin*, verses 1-21.

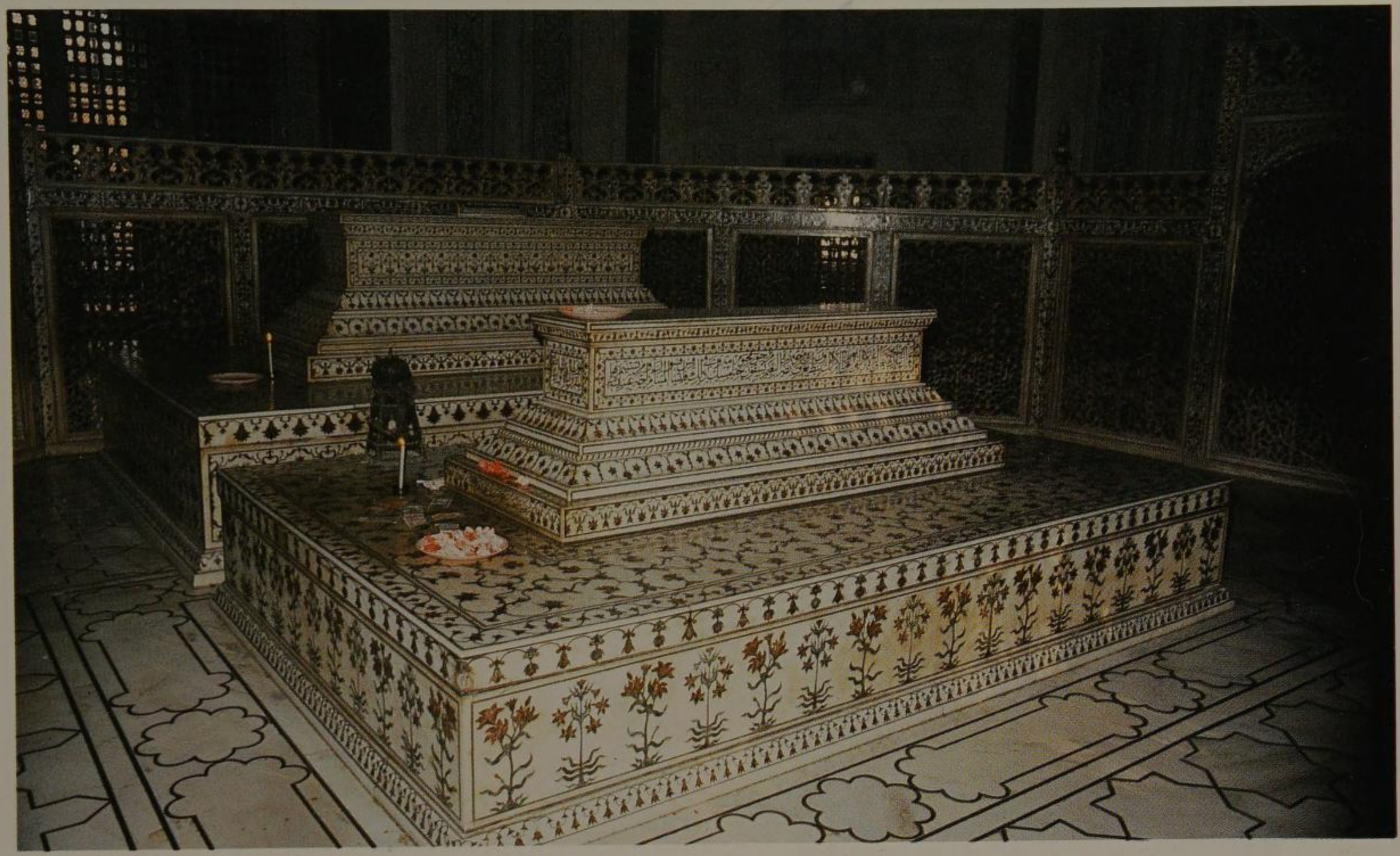


II. Southeast domed pavilion on roof of tomb.

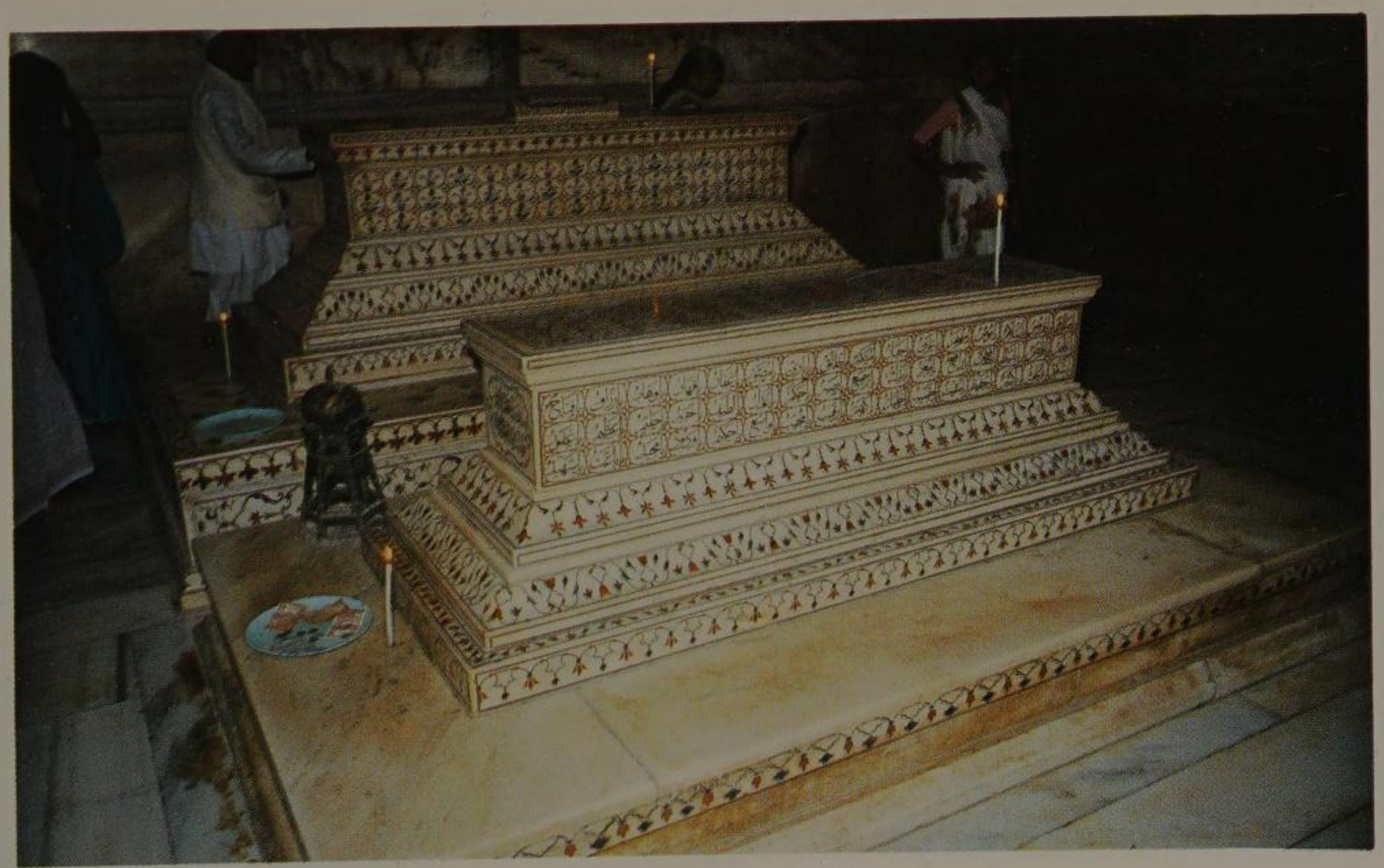


III. South door of tomb, inscribed with Sura 81, *al-Takwir*, "The Folding Up."

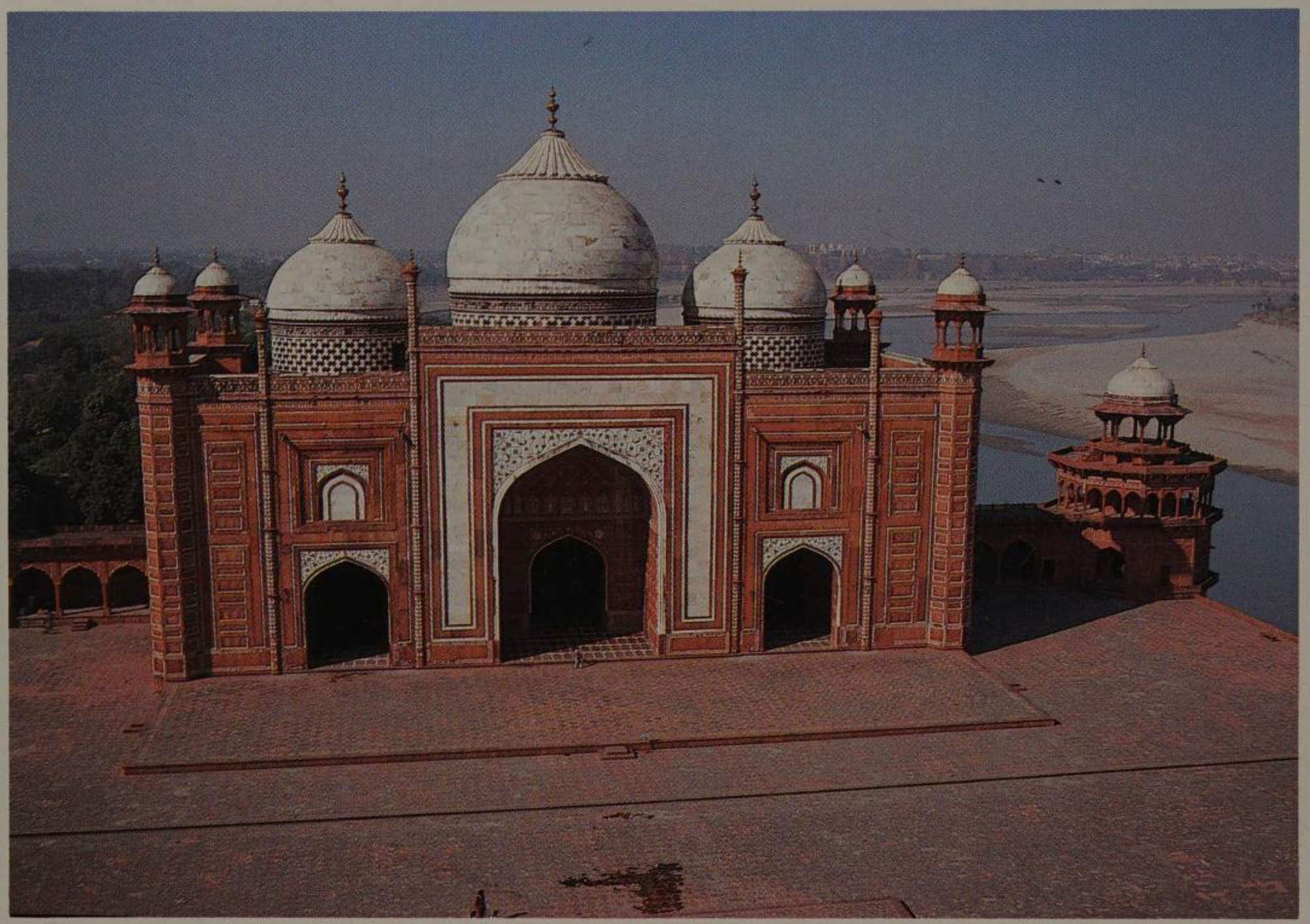
IV. Interior of tomb, detail of floral inlay on marble screen surrounding cenotaphs.



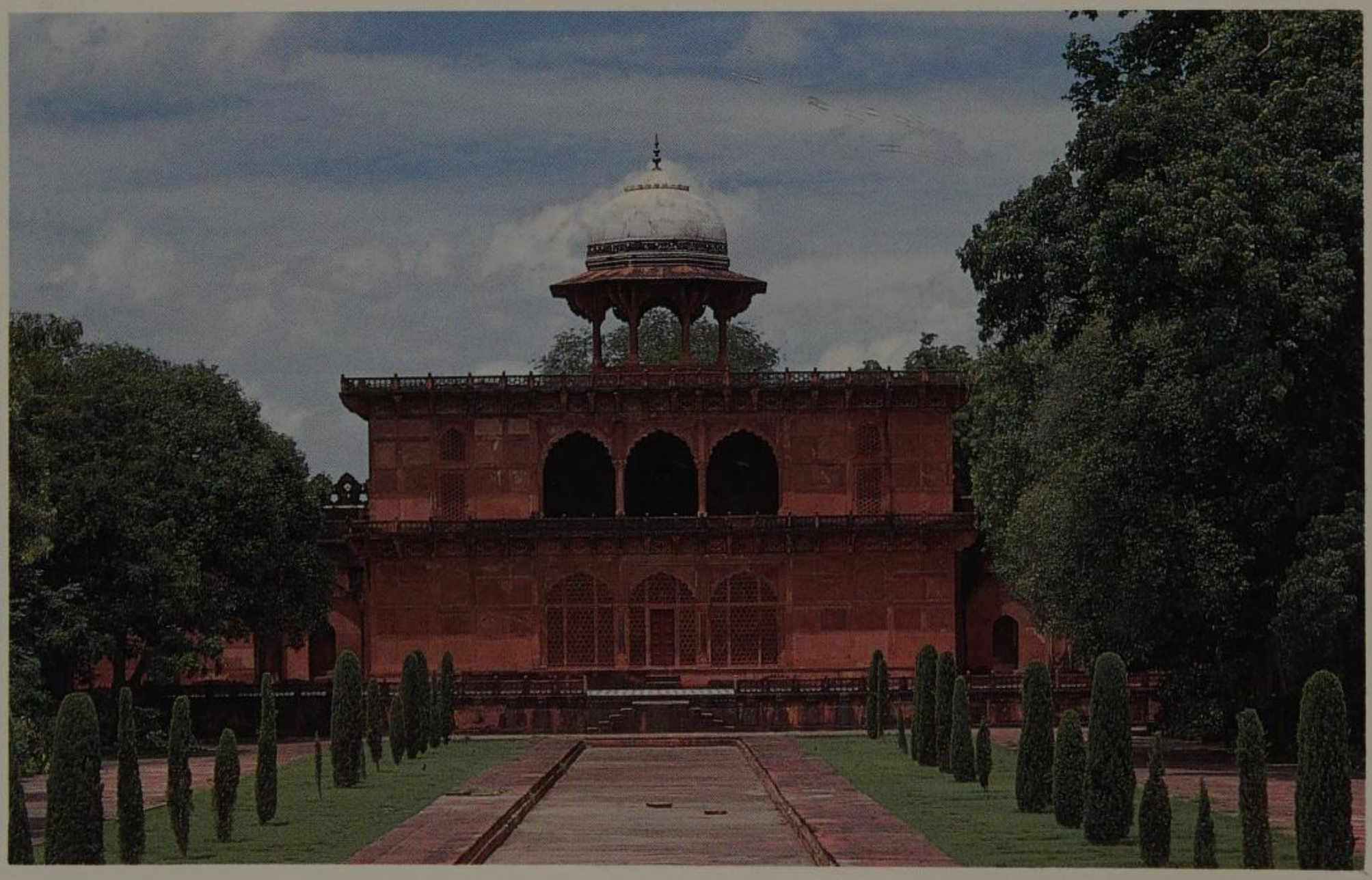
v. Cenotaphs in upper domed hall of tomb.



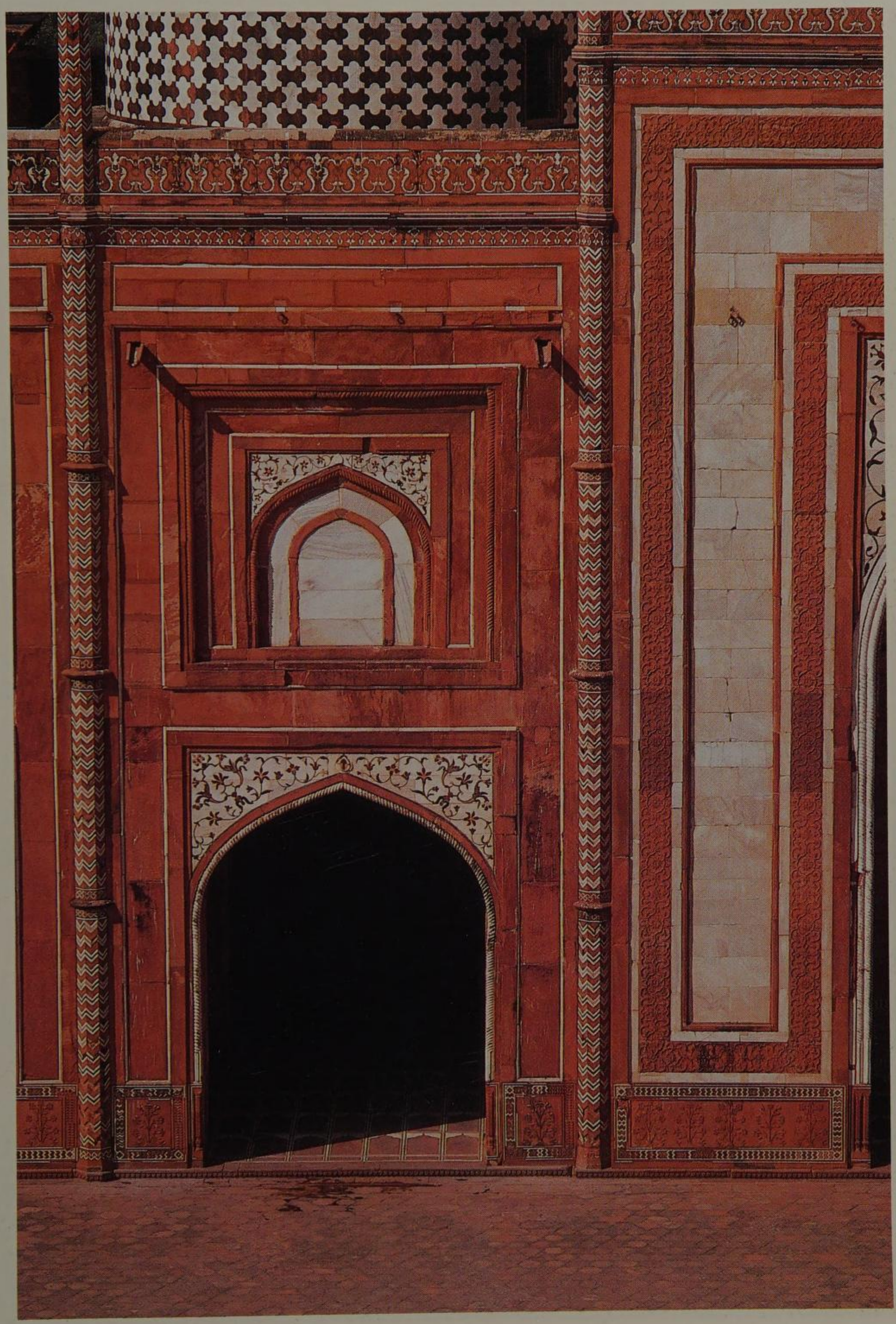
VI. Cenotaphs in crypt.



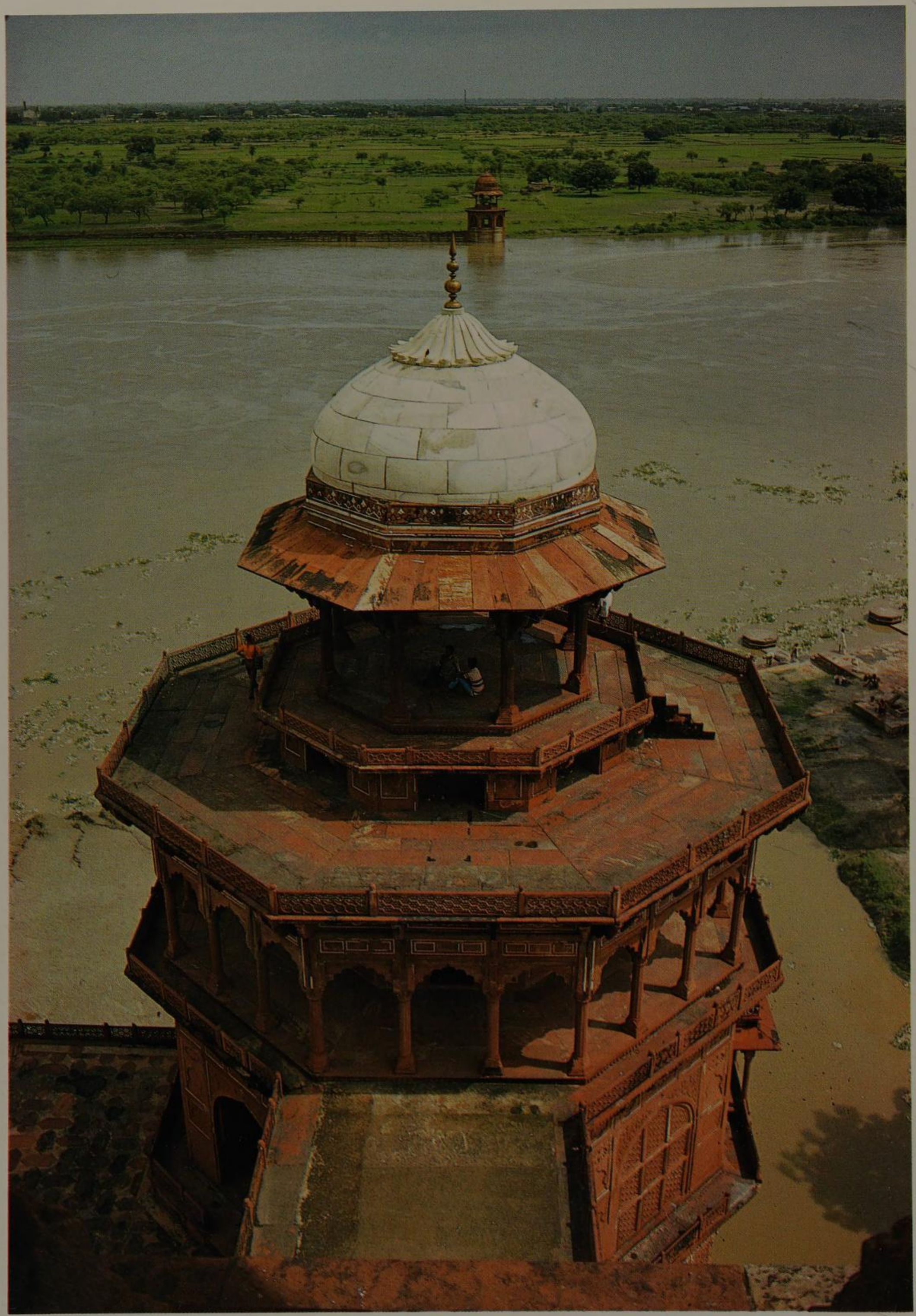
VII. Mosque facade, from east.



VIII. West garden pavilion.



IX. Detail of mosque facade.



X. Tower at northwest corner of tomb plinth, overlooking Jumna river.

# 2

# SHAH JAHAN AND ARCHITECTURE

[The following passage, which forms part of a detailed description of the Emperor's daily schedule of activities, provides important documentation for Shah Jahan's close involvement with his various architectural projects; especially important is the claim that "for the majority of the buildings he himself draws the plans."]

## 1.1. LAHORI

*Transactions in the Hall of Private Audience*

**[I, p. 148]** After four and sometimes five *gharis*, according to the scarcity or quantity of requests and affairs of the high officers of the realm, His Majesty [Shah Jahan] goes from the Hall of Public Audience to the Hall of Private Audience (*Daulat Khana-i-Khass*), where he honors the throne of prosperity by his presence. . . . In this place, only the most trusted royal attendants received admittance; and it was here that the Prime Minister (*Wazir*) and also the Lord Chancellor (*Mir Bakhshi*), being honored by the royal presence, presented to the Emperor their urgent requests.

. . . In this place, the Emperor writes in his own blessed hand responses to certain urgent petitions. In reply to some requests made to His Majesty through the First Lord of the Realm (*Vakil*), the Prime Minister, or overseers (*mutasaddiyan*) in charge of presenting the petitions of the governors of the various provinces, the capable secretaries write out the ever-obeyed orders (*farman*) as these issue from the inspired royal tongue. When finished, these orders receive the honor of the revision of the prudent and careful Emperor, who makes corrections if there be any mistakes in language or omission of matter. The fortunate Prince who acts as master of correspondence (*sahib-i-risalat*) writes on the back of the ever-obeyed order and seals it; and at the bottom of the letter, the Prime Minister adds his own signature. The orders, which are as binding as destiny, are then sent to the sacred seraglio to be ornamented with the exalted royal seal, which is in the keeping of Her Majesty the Queen Mumtaz al-Zamani.

In this hall, the great ministers present affairs relating to royal revenue estates (*jagir*) and stipends of officials and dispose of them. Moreover, the Prime Minister lays before His Majesty the requests of the needy, and the pious Emperor **[p. 149]** makes them prosperous by granting according to merit land to many, endowments to some, and daily expenses to others; and others again he relieves from indigence by throwing into the skirts of their demand alms, sums of money from the gold treasury, or else arranges favorable matches for them.

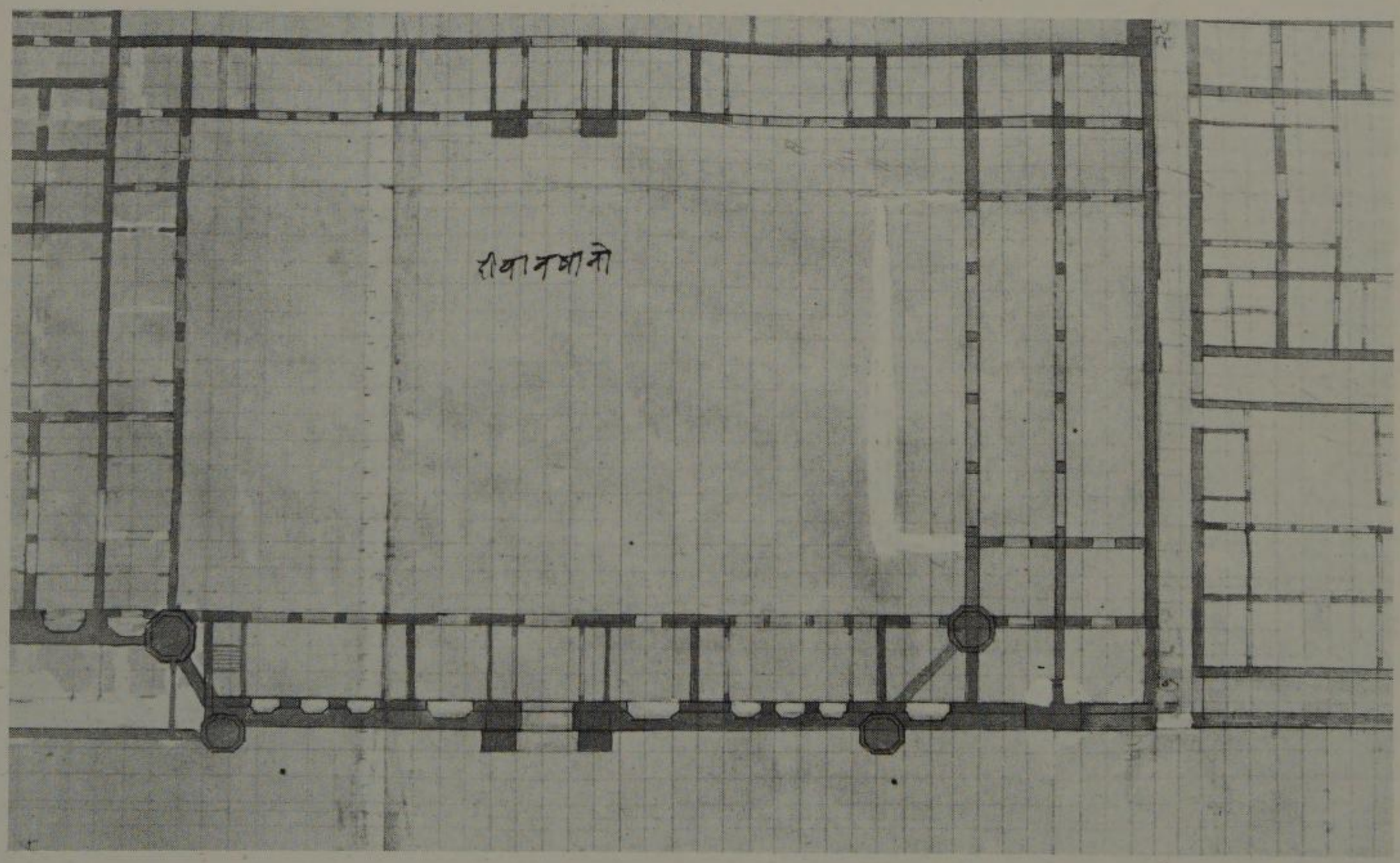
*Royal Inspection of Architectural Plans*

A part of the time His Majesty spends in inspecting the master-works (*karnamaha*) of the highly skilled, magic-working artists such as lapidaries, enamelers, and others. At other times, the superintendents of construction of royal buildings, in company

with the wonder-working architects, lay before the critical royal eye plans (*tarh*) of proposed edifices. The royal mind, which is illustrious like the sun, pays full attention to the planning and construction of these lofty and substantial buildings, which in accordance with the Arabic saying, "*Verily our relics tell of us*," speak with mute eloquence of His Majesty's God-given aspiration and sublime fortune--and for ages to come will serve as memorials of his abiding love of constructiveness (*abad-giri*), ornamentation *(zivat-gustari)*, and beauty *(nazabat-parwari*).

For the majority of buildings, he himself draws the plans (*tarah mifarmayand*). And on the plans prepared by the skillful architects, after long consideration he makes appropriate alterations and emendations. And on the final approved plans submitted by that strong pillar of state and firm arm of sovereignty, Yamin al-Daula Asaf Khan, he writes down his sacred judicious notes to serve as a guide (*dast-arriz*) for the building overseers (*mutasaddiyan*) and architects (*mi'maran*) of buildings. In this tranquil reign, the art of building has reached such a point as astonishes both the widely traveled connoisseurs and the magic-working engineers (*muhandisan*) of this incomparable craft.

And the details of these buildings will be written in their proper place, thereby making the book colorful (*rang-i-amiz*) and the pen picturesque (*naqsh-i-khiz*).



10. Detail of 18th-century grid plan of Jaipur palace. Jaipur, City Palace Museum.

# 3

# DEATH OF MUMTAZ MAHAL AND TEMPORARY BURIAL AT BURHANPUR

[Written in the flowery and convoluted prose and poetry styles then in fashion, the treatments by the three court historians and the two court poets contain essentially the same facts--although the account of Lahori is unique in giving information about all fourteen children borne by Mumtaz Mahal, not just the seven who ultimately survived. Shortly before her death, the Queen sent a message to Shah Jahan to come to her bedside to hear her final testament; the texts mention that she "recommended the children of noble birth and her mother," and that she left an estate valued at one crore of rupees, or 100 lakhs, of which Shah Jahan assigned half to Jahanara and half to the other princes and princesses. Following the death, Shah Jahan put on white mourning clothes and did not appear in court for one week; at the end of that week, he visited her temporary grave in the Zainabad garden across the Tapti river, resolving to return each Friday as long as he remained in Burhanpur.]

## 3.1. QAZWINI

### *Preamble*

**[fol. 232a]** Alas! This transitory world is unstable, and the rose of its comfort is embedded in a field of thorns. In the dustbin of the world, no breeze blows which does not raise the dust of anguish; and in the assembly of the world, no one happily occupies a seat who does not vacate it full of sorrow:

In this world, there is an ancient tradition:
Sweet pleasure is not without bitterness.

Hence, at such a time when the harbinger of Good Fortune conveyed every moment the tidings of fresh victory to the glorious ears of His Majesty, the "Shadow of the Lord of Glory"; when every second, roses of victory and conquest blossomed forth from the branches of the Everlasting Government; when the palate of the people of the world was suffused with the perfumes of joy and pleasure; and when the earth's wide expanse was illumined with the light of justice and equity of the Supreme Lord then the treacherous Time, having felt envious of this flourishing assembly of good fortune and the blooming of this flowerbed of pomp, took to the path of discord; and, having concocted an excuse to spoil the joy of the people of the world, the life-flame of the candle of the bedchamber of the kingdom and the palace lamp of sovereignty was extinguished.

The detailed explanation of this preamble is that since the Lady of heavenly threshold and of sun-like veil--the repository of divine pleasure and mainstay of pardon; the Begam of the honored begams and the Lady of the ladies of the world; the glory of the daughters of Adam and chief of the women of the Time; the Queen of the ladies of the world and honored Lady associated with Felicity; the epitome of the manners of Rabi'a; the achievements of Maryam, the mind of Khadija, the learning of Asiya, the glory of Qaizafa and the rank of Bilqis--Her Majesty the Queen Mumtaz Mahal Begam, who was the oyster of the ocean of good fortune, who most of

the years used to become pregnant with some unique pearl worthy of the crown of sovereignty, this year too, from the vernal cloud of the Caliphate, the tree of her hope had become once again pregnant with the desired fruit.

**[fol. 232b]** As the period of pregnancy had expired and the night of expectancy had come to an end, and as the time of the rising of the sun of desire had arrived, on Tuesday, the 16th of Zi'l-Qa'da, the year 1040 [16 June 1631], corresponding to the 28th of Khurdad, the signs of labor appeared; and when half of the night of Wednesday [17 June] had passed, a daughter was born. After the delivery, the condition of that Lady of angelic nature deteriorated; whereupon the Lady of sun-like veil sent the princess of the people of the world, Begam Sahib, to summon His Majesty, requesting that he should confer the honor of coming, as the hour of farewell and the time of making her last bequest (*wasiyyat*) was now at hand. His Majesty, with a grieved heart and sorrowful mind, presented himself at the head of the bed of his life-long companion. In her final moments, that Huri-like Lady opened her eyes for a look at the august form [lit., auspicious marks] of the chosen one of the Creator, thereby gathering provisions for the days of disappointment [i.e. separation]; and having recommended her worthy children, honorable mother and relations and kinsmen, when three watches (*gharis*) of the night still remained, she responded to the comfort-giving call of "*And Allah beckons thee towards the Abode of Peace*" [Qur'an].

On account of this soul-rending event, the revolving heavens had the bitter taste of disaster, and Time emptied the cup of the poison of calamity. The horde of grief making its appearance entered the huts of hearts, the eye of Time continuously shed tears of grief. The ship of power fell in the whirlpool of restlessness. The commodity of patience was plundered by the multitude of the army of grief. Patience was broken-hearted by the dashing waves of melancholy. The occurrence of this heart-rending event sent tremors through the foundation (*bina*) of Job's Patience and the plinth of Spiritual Insight (*haqiqat-asas*) of the Truth-knowing emperor. His heavenly dignity could not keep from lamentation and mourning. The world-discerning eye of the world-conquering king was flooded with tears. The mirror of the mind of the bright-hearted monarch removed the rust of vexation with torrents of tears. In this calamity, heaven was in concordance with earth. The eye of cloud raised a storm, and during that period of one night and day, on account of the torrential rain of wail and lament of the people of the world, **[fol. 233a]** the Euphrates flowed in every lane and a river of blood streamed forth from every eye.

His Majesty, the Second Sahib Qiran donned white garb, like dawn, and all the fortunate princes, illustrious amirs, pillars of the government, grandees of the kingdom and the rest of the people put on mourning-dress. Some tore the collar of the gown and a few the sleeve of life, on account of the disastrous death of that Queen of the Time.

*Temporary Burial in the Zainabad Garden, and Account of Grief of Shah Jahan*

The august body of that one encompassed by divine mercy was temporarily buried (*amanat*) in the building in the middle of the garden of Zainabad at Burhanpur, which is situated on the opposite side of the river Tapti.

The grief which on account of the occurrence of this endurance-destroying event overtook the august mind of the world and Solomon of the Age, if brought within the

compass of writing, would be a cause of bewilderment to the people of the world. Therefore, on account of the excess of distress and multitude of grief he did not appear for one full week at the balcony (*jharoka*) of the Hall of Private and Public Audience (*daulat khana-i-khass-wa-'am*) and attend to the transaction of affairs of state and important matters of the kingdom, which, left to himself, were not missed by him even for one day.

Repeatedly he uttered by his tongue of inspired speech that: "If the business of government and the important affairs of the Caliphate, which have been entrusted to us from the office of Divine Decree, had not been thrust upon us [*damangir* = "caught hold of the skirt"], and if the World-Creating God had not charged us with the protection of the honor of sovereignty, which entails the custodianship of the world and the protection of all humanity, as well as causing the flourishing of the affairs of the world and the administration of important matters for the common good--if all these had not become incumbent and obligatory in accordance with the creed of perfect wisdom, we would have abandoned kingship and taken up sovereignty over the world of seclusion. And having distributed among our worthy offspring the whole of this vast kingdom which the Exalted God, may his pomp and grandeur be glorified, has conferred on us by his very generosity, without anyone else's obligation, we would have spent the rest of our precious life in offering prayers to the Real God." All the while, the silent tongue of His Majesty uttered this speech:

> The name and fame of kingship has caught hold of our skirt;
> Otherwise, the horizons would be in tumult from our misfortune.

And for about two years after this distressing event, having given up listening to musical instruments and song, pleasant pastimes, and donning jewelry and rich dresses, **[fol. 233b]** there constantly appeared involuntary symptoms of grief, sorrow and distress on the forehead of auspicious omen of His Majesty. And on the 'Id festivals and other functions, which the planets of the sphere of chastity and the galaxy of the sky of fortune [*daulat*, also government] arranged in the royal palace of the Caliphate, when he would not see that moon of the zenith of Felicity in their midst, his august eyes would shed pearls of drops of sadness. So that, on account of excessive weeping, he came to need spectacles (*ainak*) after this heart-consuming event. The poet Talib Kalim, having composed this quatrain (*ruba'i*) on the topic for the instruction of His Majesty, submitted it and received royal praise:

> My eye has not become dazzled just on account of weeping or pain;
> Separation has drawn the curtain on the affair.
>
> Every house, the master of which sets out on a journey,
> Mist and dust settles down therein.

And his auspicious beard, which before this grievous event had not more than ten or twelve gray hairs, which he used to pluck out, within a few days turned more than one-third gray; and he gave up the practice of plucking out gray hair. And he used to say, the fact that at his age, the august beard had become white so quickly was due to the excess of affliction and pain on account of this soul-consuming event. And on a

number of occasions, it issued from the tongue of inspired speech: "Even though the Incomparable Giver had conferred on us such great bounty, more than which cannot be imagined, through His grace and generosity, yet the person with whom we wanted to enjoy it has gone."

*Eulogy of the Queen*

Not only did the august mind of His fortunate Majesty and the royal offspring become overwhelmed by distress and grief at the bewilderment-causing demise of that bedecker of the chief seat of heavens, but each one of the people of the world also received a morsel of grief from this table of pain, because the bounty of gifts and benevolence, and favors and charity, of that Lady of the world was universal for the people of the world, like heavenly bounty itself; and she always kept open the gates of alms and charity on the face of needy people and constantly interceded for the crimes of creatures in the presence of His Majesty, the Shadow of God.

Heinous crimes, the pardoning of which no one of the fortunate princes or nobles of high rank **[fol. 234a]** had the power to request, the emperor of the Time forgave at the intercession of that Queen of heavenly couch. So that several persons, whose crimes, on account of their seriousness, could not be contained in the scales of forgiveness and who deserved to be put to death, got their release at her intercession.

As the thread of speech has reached this spot, a brief account of the chief particulars of that divinely pardoned Lady may be conveyed through setting down certain events of her life.

The queen of angelic habits was the unique person of the Time and the distinguished one (*mumtaz*) of the Age, in chastity, modesty, goodness of character, purity of conduct, nature and disposition, guarding of the honor of government (*daulat*), observance of prayers and acts of devotion and seeking the pleasure of the Lord of the Skies. Even though the fortune-starred daughter of Muzaffar Husain Mirza Safavi and the honorable daughter of Shahnawaz Khan, son of 'Abd al-Rahim Khan Khanan, also, as has been previously mentioned, had been exalted by the good fortune of marriage with His Majesty, the Second Sahib Qiran, yet they enjoyed nothing more than the title of wifeship. The intimacy, deep affection, attention and favor which His Majesty had for the Lady, he did not have for any other. And always that Lady of the Age was his intimate companion, colleague, and close confidante in distress and comfort, joy and grief, on journeys, or in residence.

She always had the glory of distinction and honor of preeminence of the felicity of constant company and companionship and fortune of closeness and intimacy with His Majesty. The friendship and concord between them had reached such an extent, the like of which has never been known between a husband and wife from among the classes of sovereigns, or the rest of the people. And this was not merely out of carnal desire, but high virtues and pleasing habits, outward and inward goodness, and physical and spiritual compatibility on both sides had been the cause of great love and affection, and abundant affinity and familiarity.

The birth of that divinely pardoned Lady, Her Majesty the Queen, had taken place on the 14th of the month of dignified Rajab, in the year 1001 Hijri [15 April 1593], corresponding to the 28th of the month of Farwardin, during the thirty-eight regnal year of the Emperor Akbar. At the age of twenty, that one possessed of good fortune,

in this world and the next, entered the wedlock of His Majesty the Second Sahib Qiran. And she enjoyed the happiness of religion and the world, under the protective shadow of the wings of the Phoenix (*huma*) of auspicious omen of the undeclinable fortune (*daulat*) of the Caliph of God, for a period of nineteen lunar years and eight months and nine days, or nineteen solar years and one month and six days.

*Account of the Royal Offspring*

And she brought forth into the wide expanse of the world, from the loins of the exalted Emperor, fourteen worthy and fortunate (*arjumand*) children, each one like a full moon in perfection--eight sons of high extraction and six daughters of auspicious stars:

She brought from the groin of the exalted king
Fourteen royal issues into the world.

Of these, seven now adorn Paradise,
The remaining seven are the candles of government.

When she embellished the world with these children,
She waned like the moon after fourteen.

When she brought out the last single pearl,
She then emptied her body like an oyster.

And of the total, there are seven royal offspring of exalted lineage, high stars, auspicious nature and blessed dignity, who still add to the beauty of the plain of existence.

*First*: the Lady of most exalted threshold, holy titles, sun's veil, glittering jewel of the treasure of abashment and modesty, precious gem from the mine of magnificence and might, the best tree of the garden of glory, the choice picked fruit of the orchard of sovereignty, and provider of light to the bedchamber of government of the Second Sahib Qiran, Jahanara Begam, entitled Begam Sahib,

*Second*: spring of the garden of magnificence and fortune, the cloud of the garden of pomp and glory, the prince of high family, of heavenly power, of lofty birth, of angelic nature, wisdom-loving and learning, seeker of wisdom and knowledge, Sultan Dara Shikoh.

*Third*: star of the constellation of pomp and great repute, pearl of the casket of grandeur and good fortune, one who adds to the splendor of the workshop of creation, Sultan Shah Shuja'.

*Fourth*: the bright Venus of the sphere of eminence, one who adds light to the pavilion of chastity, Roshan Ara Begam.

*Fifth*: the ornament of the throne of kingship, decoration of the sleeve of world-conquest, prince of high aspiration, lofty disposition, victorious, having the allotted share of good fortune, Sultan Aurangzeb.

*Sixth*: the crown-jewel of the government of distinction, worthy successor of happiness and worthiness, **[fol. 235a]** the prince having a crescent for his stirrups and the sky as his steed, Sultan Murad Bakhsh.

*Seventh*: the last fruit of the date palm tree of Existence, the Second Maryam and another Bilqis, the bright star of the sky of felicity, Gauhar Ara Begam, who is the last of the pearls of the ocean of honor.

It is hoped that all the seven royal offspring of high birth, whose noble august existence is like the seven heavens for the beauty of the beloved of existence, attain natural lifespans and the apex of outward and inward perfections under the shadow of the government of their real benefactor and their metaphoric God [i.e., their father, the King].

The august age of that chief of houris of the gardens of paradise was thirty-eight solar years and two months and thirty-nine lunar years and four months and four days. And for the date of her death having vestiges of pardon, Bebadal Khan Gilani, under the instruction of the Inspirer of the Unseen World, found this hemistich:

"May the abode of Mumtaz Mahal be Paradise!"
(*ja-i-mumtaz mahal jannat bad* = 1040)

And there is no doubt in this, that the abode of that fortunate, generous and holy-natured lady is the palace of Paradise.

*Legacy of the Queen*

**[fol. 235b]** And from the personal estate left behind by that divinely pardoned Lady, Her Majesty the Queen, Mumtaz al-Zamani, which came to more than one crore of rupees in value, consisting of gold coins (*ashrafi*), rupees, jewels, gem-studded utensils and other articles, His Majesty the Second Sahib Qiran gave half to that Lady of most exalted threshold and sun-like sun's veil, the bedecker of the couch (*masnad*) of the Caliphate, Begam Sahib; and the other half was distributed among the other royal issue of lofty lineage and of exalted dignity. And four lakhs of rupees, half in cash and half in fief (*jagir*), were added to the annual stipend (*saliyana*) of that princess of the world and its people, Begam Sahib, which was previously six lakhs of rupees; and the responsibilities which were attached to the divinely pardoned Lady, Her Majesty the Queen, were entrusted to that queen (*malika*) of the women of the world.

Ishaq Beg, who is one of the elite men of Yazd and a man possessed of stewardly temperament, and who had been the *Mir Saman* of that Lady, Her Majesty the Queen, was honored with a robe and appointed to the post of *Diwani* and *Mir Saman* [of Jahanara]. And according to the custom of her honorable mother, that veiled one of the pavilions of good fortune entrusted her signet (*muhr*) to Satti Khanam, and also consigned the charge of the affairs of her establishment (*sarkar*) to **[fol. 236a]** that Rabi'a of the Age.

3.2. LAHORI

**[I, p. 384]** RIDING OF THE CAMEL-LITTER OF THE QUEEN OF THE CUPOLAS OF CHASTITY, OF HEAVENLY THRESHOLD, AND OF SUN-LIKE CURTAINS, HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN, MUMTAZ AL-ZAMANI, FROM THIS TRANSITORY WORLD AND THIS MANSION OF PAIN AND AFFLICTION TO THE ETERNAL PLEASURE HOUSE AND SPIRITUAL ABODE OF DELIGHT.

*Account of the Queen's Death*

The fickle time and unfavorable age--whose joy is filled with grief and whose syrup is mixed with poison; the rose of whose happiness is coupled with the thorn of oppression and the wine of whose pleasure is accompanied by the blight of affliction--whomever it raises, it overthrows, and with whomever it mixes, it does not accommodate.

At this time, due to the justice and liberality of the Monarch of the Earth and the Time, Lord of the world and its people, the king who is the asylum of Faith, the Emperor conversant with Divine truths, had opened up the gates of goodness and bounty to the faces of those near and far; the means of favor and benevolence were available for kinsmen as well as strangers; minds were free from grief and hearts were attuned with happiness; and neither did sedition **[p. 385]** have the courage (*rui*) [lit., face] to rise from slumber, nor was the Age accustomed to tyranny. But all of a sudden, Time displayed its traits of oppression and temperament of tormenting the heart and inexorable events brought about the untimely death of that Queen of the queens of the world, the Lady of the ladies of the Time, the Lady of the houses of magnanimity and honor, Her Majesty the Queen of lofty veil, Mumtaz al-Zamani.

The details of this bewildering account are these: after the passing of midnight on Wednesday, the 17th of the month Z'il-Qa'da 1040 [17 June 1631], corresponding to the 26th of Khurdad, a daughter was born to that tree of the orchard of good fortune; whereupon her feverish temperature (*mizaj-i-wahhaj*) transgressed the bounds of moderation, and the element (*unsur*) tempered with soundness of health (*sihhat*) descended from the zenith of rectitude.

When she realized that it was the time of the transitory soul's departure from this transitory world, and the hour of return of this borrowed short life [to its original abode], the Lady of august titles sent the Princess of lofty extraction, Begam Sahib, to request His Most Exalted Majesty who was present in that neighborhood to take the trouble of coming to her presence. The King of kind nature and affection arrived in great distress (*ashuftagi*) and grief at the bed of that companion of long standing and sincerity. That wayfarer to the hereafter, having recommended the children of noble birth and her honorable mother, made the last meeting (*didar*) of this chosen one of God and this manifestation of unlimited mercy, the provision for this distant journey and companion for this long travel. And having agreeably [lit., with open forehead] responded to the call of "*Return to Thy Lord, willingly and ungrudgingly*" [Qur'an], she hastened to the highest heaven and vicinity of the mercy of the Lord of the Worlds.

This **[p. 386]** unexpected incident and soul-rending disaster filled the world with bewilderment and its people with grief. The edifice of desire got demolished in utter disappointment and the army of patience and repose was forced to retreat. And on

account of this heart-pounding event and perturbing occurrence, the feet of Job-like patience of the King of mountain-like dignity faltered. And from the breath of sighs and moisture of tears, the mirror of his sun-displaying mind, like the sun's mirror, which had never before seen the face of darkness, now gathered the rust of turbidity (*kadurat*).

In this grief-augmenting mourning, due to excessive weeping, the eyes of mortals shed oceans of tears and the eyes of celestials became tempestuous. The king of heavenly throne put on white dress, and the successful princes, the grandees of the state of exalted portion and the rest of the servants and attendants donned the garb of mourning.

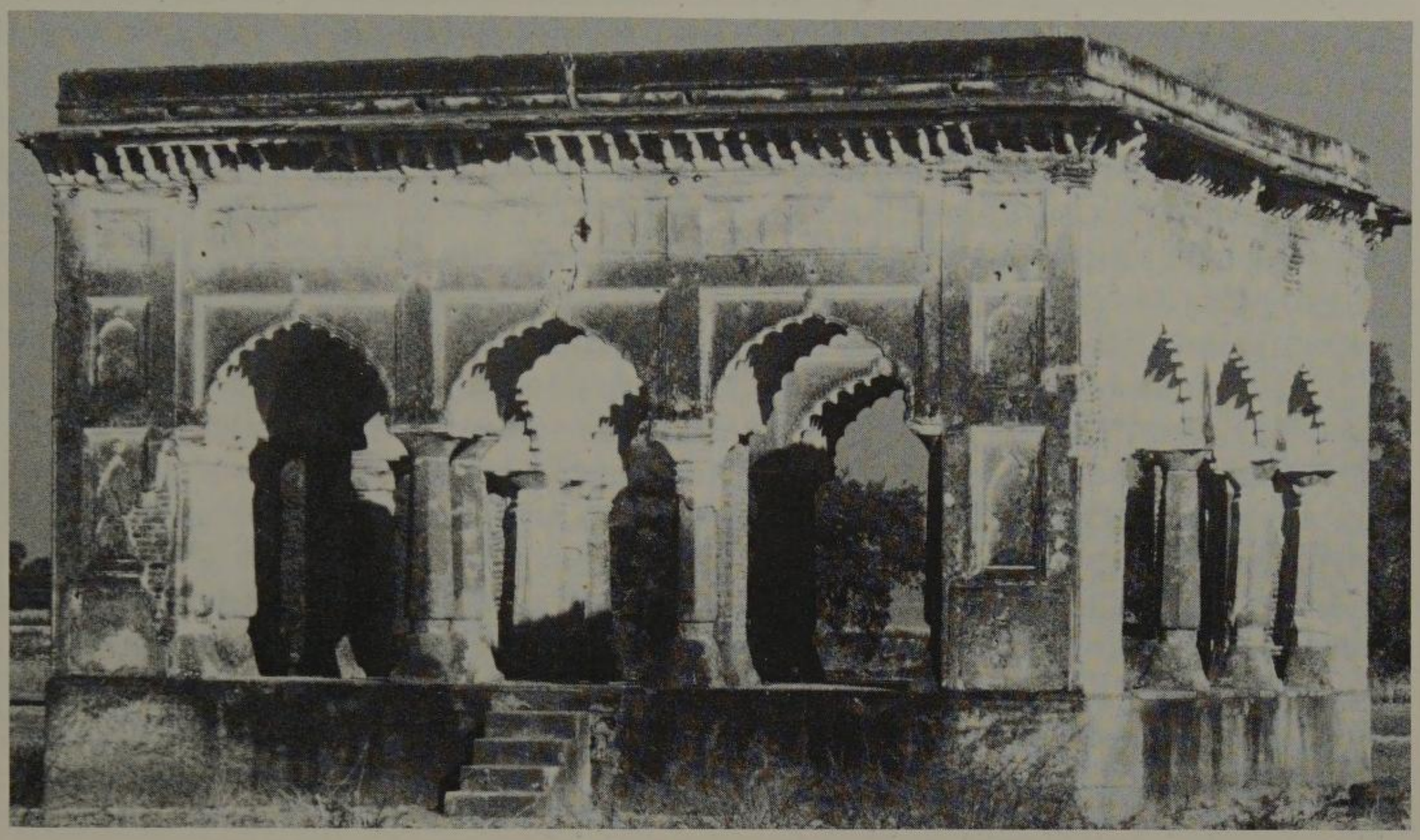
*Temporary Burial in the Zainabad Garden, and Account of Shah Jahan's Grief*

And that treasury of modesty and coffer of chastity was buried according to the custom of temporary burial (*amanat*) in the building (*'imarat*) inside the garden of Zainabad at Burhanpur, which is situated on the other side of the river Tapti; and the said building is constructed in the midst of a tank, 100 by 100 [cubits or yards]. How do I say that a whole world of benevolence and beneficence and a universe (*'alam*) of goodness and munificence became covered with dust. Nay, nay, that one enshrined in the favor of the glorified Lord was taken to the eternal paradise from the palace of sovereignty. And that chosen one of the sight (*manzur-i-nazar*) of the Sahib Qiran was taken from the world's wilderness and deposited in the spiritual pleasurehouse.

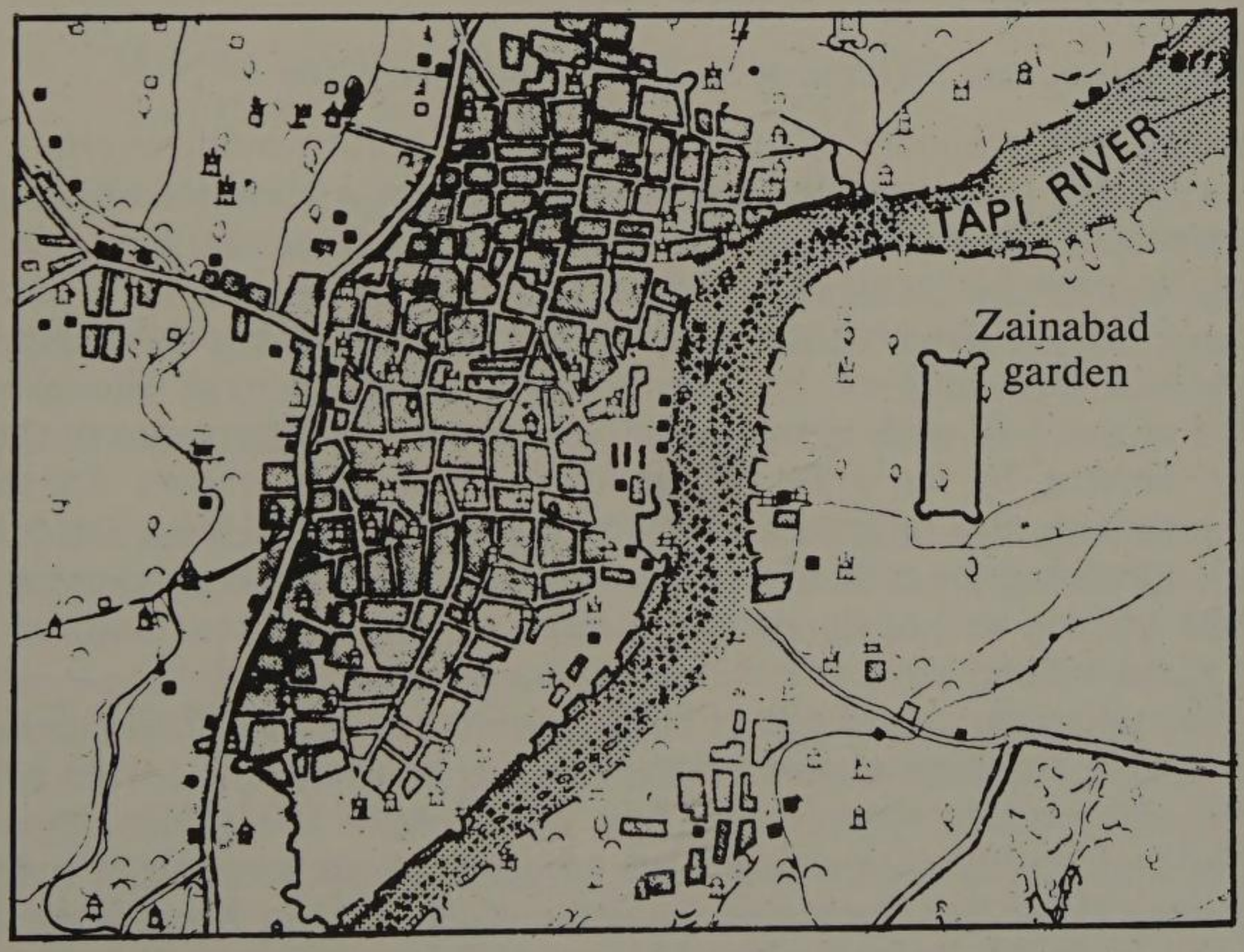
Towards the close of Thursday the 25th of the month of Z'il-Qa'da 1040 [25 June 1631], the truth-natured king crossed the river Tapti and went to the grave (*darih*) of that recipient of divine pardon and gladdened her restful soul with recitation of the Fatiha. Whatever fretfulness and restlessness emanated from the monarch of the throne and lord of the crown defies description. He made a vow (*iltizam farmudan*) that as long as the heaven-touching standards were in that city, he would favor the tomb (*mazar*) of that pardoned one, having signs of divine mercy, with his precious visit every Friday.

**[p. 387]** In spite of the fact that all his sacred time is spent in raising the standards of justice and equity and overthrowing the marks of mischief and sedition, and he always strives in fulfilling the divine will and obligations of God's deputyship [*zill-allahi*; lit., Shadow of God], during this grief-increasing event, he did not appear for one full week at the balcony (*jharoka*) of the Royal Audience Hall (*daulat khana-i-khass-o-'am*), and did not transact the affairs of the kingdom which he does not like to miss unnecessarily.

It was repeatedly uttered by his divine revelation-interpreting tongue that, if the heavy burden of the divine deputyship (*khulafat-i-ilahi*) and the highly dignified responsibility of kingship, encompassing the well-being of divinely entrusted subjects had not been imposed on this seeker of the will of God, and if he did not consider that turning his head away from acceptance of this precious stock would incur the displeasure of the Creator of the world, and if according to the dictate of reason which is subordinate to religious law (*shar'*), and in accordance with the dictates of religious laws, which lies outside the purview of reason, maintenance of the affairs of the kingdom and perpetuating the dignities of the state were not indispensable, he



11. Baradari pavilion in Zainabad garden at Burhanpur, probable place of temporary burial of Mumtaz Mahal.




12. Plan of Burhanpur.

would have certainly abandoned the high-ranked vast empire of Hindustan and divided among the princes of noble birth this extensive kingdom--not only that which his grand ancestors of lofty achievements had wrested with the world-conquering sword from several throne-occupying sultans and rajas of haughty demeanor, but also that which has been annexed to the protected kingdom through the efforts of the heroes of this government and warriors of this kingdom, and he would have spent the rest of the precious life in acquiring the eternal life which lies in the worship of the true God and praise of the real object of prostration.

And after this extremely vexatious occurrence, for two years he avoided all kinds of pleasures and entertainments, particularly listening to songs and music and donning night-illuminating gems and costly clothes. And on the occasions of *'Ids* and other festivals, when the veiled ladies of chastity assembled in the female apartments of good fortune, **[p. 388]** and indulged in the formalities of pleasure and happiness, in the absence of that traveler to the realm of piety, tears would uncontrollably (*bi-ikhtiyar*) roll down from his august eyes.

And in his august beard, which had not more than twenty gray hairs, after this grief-increasing event, within a short time, many hairs turned gray. It is hoped that Most Exalted God will make this the last of calamities and will not allow the hand of termination to reach the skirt of the daily advancing government:

> If there is grief for us, may it be the share of thy enemy,
> And if there is, God forbid, any grief for you, let it be for us!
>
> Whether our affair is good or bad, it is proper that
> Thy head be secure, come what may!

*Eulogy of the Queen, and Mention of Shah Jahan's Other Wives*

The account of the bounty of that Queen of the world would require a separate volume. In seeking pardons of the crimes which in no way admitted of excuse, and in the effacements of sins which on no account allowed intercession, the request of that lady of angelic origin had great effectiveness.

As a result, many of those worthy of being put to death or imprisonment, who had in no way had any hope of life or freedom, obtained fresh life through the intercession of that well-wishing one. She had carried the observance of the degrees of chastity, abiding by the grades of modesty, approved conduct and restrained behavior, sustaining the requisites of reputation of the royal household (*namus-i-padhshahi*), upholding the rules of devotions to God, seeking the good-pleasure of the Creator, and wishing well of the people at large, to such an extent that the tongue is incapable of speech and cannot discharge the dues of its description.

At the time when the august age of His Most Exalted Majesty had reached fifteen lunar years, eight months and seven days, which is equivalent to fifteen solar years, two months and fourteen days [7 Zi'l-Hijja 1015/5 April 1607], His Majesty Jannat Makani [Jahangir] asked in marriage that occupant of the howdah of magnificence and eminence, who is the agreeable daughter of Asaf Khan Khan Khanan, son of I'timad al-Daula, for His Most Exalted Majesty of Solomon's rank.

**[p. 389]** And after the expiry of five lunar years, three months and two days, which comes to five solar years, one month and five days, when the everlasting age of the lord of fortune had reached twenty lunar years, eleven months and nine days, equivalent to twenty solar years, three months and nineteen days, His Majesty Jannat Makani arranged the function (*jashn*) of that bedecker of the throne of Fortune, from whose precious age approximately twenty years had elapsed, in a manner which befits the majesty of the emperors of heavenly rank--the details of which cannot be described by the tongue of pen. And having bestowed favors upon His Most Exalted Majesty [Shah Jahan], on the night of Friday, the 9th of Rabi' I 1021 [10 May 1612], corresponding to the 22nd of Urdi ihist, he tied the marriage tiara (*sihra*) of glittering pearls on the august forehead with his own auspicious hands.

Whereupon His Majesty, having mounted in heavenly majesty, rendered happy, through the arrival of his august footsteps, the house (*manzil*) of that firm pillar of the state I'timad al-Daula. And His Majesty Jannat Makani, having graced that abode-of-joy with great pleasure and happiness, honored by his presence that prince of exalted station. And in the royal presence, the wedding knot was tied and the actual wedding ceremony was conducted; and the marriage settlement (*kabin*) was fixed at five lakhs of rupees.

That honor of religion and the world enjoyed the happiness of both the worlds in the palace of fortune (*iqbal*) for nineteen lunar years, eight months and nine days, which amounts to nineteen solar years, one month and six days; and after a life of 39 lunar years, four months and six days, which comes to 38 solar years and two months, she migrated from this transitory place-of-turmoil to the eternal abode-of-repose. For the chronogram of this death, Bebadal Khan was inspired with this hemistich:

"May the abode of Mumtaz Mahal be Paradise"
(*ja-i-mumtaz mahal jannat bad* = 1040)

Earlier, before Her Late Majesty the Queen's happy union, the fortune-starred daughter of Muzaffar Husain Mirza, son of Sultan **[p. 390]** Husain Mirza, son of Bahram Mirza, son of Shah Ismail Safavi, had obtained the honor of exalted marriage to His Majesty, [on the 21st of] the month of Rajab 1019 Hijri [9 October 1610], at the time when his august age had crossed nineteen years, from which union a holy daughter, Purhunar Banu by name, was born on the 12th of Jumada II 1020 [22 August 1611].

Likewise, the daughter of Shahnawaz Khan, son of 'Abd al-Rahim Khan Khanan, during His Most Exalted Majesty's first expedition to the Deccan, had also been granted the honor of marriage, due to political expediency, on the 2nd of Ramazan 1026 [3 September 1617], five years, five months, and twenty-three days after the marriage with Her Highness the Queen. And having gone, under the orders of His Majesty Jannat Makani, to the house (*manzil*) of 'Abd al-Rahim Khan Khanan, and having brought that one of chaste nature into wedlock, on the 12th of Rajab 1028 [25 June 1618], a son, Prince Jahan Afroz by name, was born to her in the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad; and he departed to the rose-garden of Iram [i.e., he died] in Burhanpur after one year and nine months [Rabi II 1030/March 1620]. She performs the honor of service [to His Majesty], but is content with this illustrious connection in

name only (*ba-nam-i-in nisbat-i-nami*), being satisfied with merely this precious alliance.

However, this fortunate one of happy alliance, through her inherited good fortune and God-given luck, her purest sincerity and special attention, her seeking His Majesty's good pleasure and her familiarity with his temperament, occupied such a place in the bountiful heart of the world monarch that the affection of no one else could be contained therein. And the stature-appreciating (*qadr-shinas*) and quality-recognizing (*paya-shinas*) king did not like to part with that light of his night-chamber (*shabistan*) of the caliphate, neither in hardship or ease, nor on journeys or in residence (*safar-wa-hazar*).

*Account of the Royal Offspring*

From that mine of the gems of sovereignty, fourteen illustrious children had come forth: **[p. 391]** eight sons of auspicious stars and six chaste-bodied daughters, of whom seven royal offspring (*padshahzadaha*) of lofty extraction with the lustre of their eternal life continue to add to the beauty of the sky of dignity and glory like the seven planets.

*First*: the pearl of the casket of fortune, sparkling star of the constellation of purity, Princess Hur al-Nisa Begam, who stepped into the world of existence in the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad on Saturday, the 8th of Safar 1022 [30 March 1613]; but she decorated the camel-litter [i.e., undertook the journey] to the next world in Ajmer, after a life of three years and one month, on Wednesday, the 24th Rabi II 1025 [11 May 1616].

*Second*: the princess [lit., queen] of high threshold and holy titles, the possessor of allotted portion of chastity and share of modesty, the mistress (*sahiba*) of the universe and princess of the world and the people of the world, Jahanara Begam, who is celebrated by the worthy title of Begam Sahib, and who, with her choice qualities and praiseworthy habits, is distinguished with the august favors of the monarch of the age and illustrious favors of the Lord of the Time. She added to the rank of existence on Saturday, the 21st of Safar 1023 [2 April 1614], at the time when His Most Exalted Majesty was engaged in the expedition against the Rana.

*Third*: the star of the constellation of kingship, gem of the casket of fortune, the crown jewel of royalty, the coolness of the eye of the emperor, the first-born son of the caliphate, most excellent successor of valor, the fortune-seeking prince Muhammad Dara Shikoh, who arrived at the audience-hall of divinity from the secluded chamber of Unity in the town of Ajmer on the night of Monday, the 29th of Safar 1024 [30 March 1615], after His Majesty's return from the expedition against the Rana.

*Fourth*: the signet of the ring of magnificence and heading of the royal edict of glory, the preamble of the letter of kingship and illuminated title-page of sovereignty, Prince **[p. 392]** Muhammad Shah Shuja' Bahadur arrived at the capital of Existence in the said town on the night of Sunday, the 18th of Jumada II 1025 [3 July 1616].

*Fifth*: the veil of chastity and headgear of modesty, Raushan Ara Begam, was born at Burhanpur on the 2nd of Ramazan 1026 [3 September 1617].

*Sixth*: the border of the dress of world-taking and light of the pupil of kingship, the upholder of the standards of fortune and illuminator of the candle of fame, Prince

Muhammad Aurangzeb, took his place in the garden of creation on the night of Sunday, the 15th of Z'il-Qa'da 1027 [3 November 1618].

*Seventh*: the plant of the garden of good fortune and rosebush of the orchard of felicity and graces, Prince Izad Bakhsh, was born in the environs of Sirhind on Wednesday, the 11th of Muharram 1029 Hijri [18 December 1619], and responded favorably to the caller of Truth [i.e., he died] at Burhanpur in the month of Rabi II 1031 [February-March 1621].

*Eighth*: the moon of the sphere of eminence, Princess Surayya Banu Begam, rose from the horizon of good fortune on the night of the 20th Rajab 1030 Hijri [10 June 1621], and hid her face in the veil of non-existence, after a seven-year span of life, on the 23rd of Sha'ban 1037 [28 April 1628].

*Ninth*: a son came into Existence at the Abode of Joy (*Shadiabad*) Mandu in 1032 [1622]. Since in this house of hardship, pleasure and pain are coupled and joy and grief are twins, he departed to the garden of the Abode of Peace before his name was decided upon.

*Tenth*: the Prince of exalted birth, Murad Bakhsh, placed his foot in the circle of Existence on the night of Wednesday, the 25th of Z'il-Hijja 1033 [8 October 1624] in the Rohtas fort.

**[p. 393]** *Eleventh*: the Prince of high pedigree, Lutf Allah, came to the stage of Existence from the veil of non-existence, before the august accession on the night of Wednesday, the 14th of Safar 1036 [4 November 1626], and after a life-span of one year and seven months, he took the journey to the realm of piety after the imperial coronation, on the 9th of Ramazan 1037 [13 May 1628].

*Twelfth*: Prince Daulat Afza appeared on the scene of Existence on the night of Wednesday, the 6th of Ramazan 1037 [8 May 1628]; and after a life-span of one year and fifteen days, he hastily turned his face to the district of non-existence on the 20th of Ramazan the next year [13 May 1629].

*Thirteenth*: A holy daughter was born on the 10th of Ramazan 1039 [23 April 1630]; and the midwife of Death picked her up to fondle [i.e., she died shortly after birth].

*Fourteenth*: the last offspring of good fortune, Gauhar Ara Begam, came to the cradle of Existence in Burhanpur on the night of Wednesday, the 17th of Z'il-Qa'da 1040 [17 June 1631].

*Legacy of the Queen*

His Majesty granted half of the moveable property left over (*matrukat*), comprising gold coins (*ashrafi*), rupees, jewelry, jewel-studded utensils, and other things, the value of which totaled more than one crore of rupees, to that child [lit., coolness] of the eye of sovereignty, and the largest pearl in the necklace of government, Begam Sahib. And the other half was granted to the other pearls of the ocean of glory and bright stars of the sphere of felicity. And the important affairs which had been attached to the divinely pardoned Lady were entrusted to that veiled one of the curtains of honor. And having added an increase of four lakhs of rupees, half in cash and half in fief (*jagir*), to her previous annual stipend (*saliyana*) of six lakhs of rupees, he honored Ishaq Beg Yazdi, who is of stewardly temperament (*kadkhuda-manish*) and held the post of Majordomo (*Mir Saman*) of Her late Majesty the Queen, with

the post of Diwan of that one of high lineage. **[p. 394]** And that chief jewel of the crown of government, pursuant to the practice of her honorable mother, entrusted her signet-seal (*muhr*) to Satti al-Nisa Khanan.

## 3.3. SALIH

**[p. 445]** THE GRACEFUL DEPARTURE OF THE LADY OF HOLY TITLES, THE ELECT OF THE AGE (*MUMTAZ-I-ZAMAN*) AND THE MARYAM OF THE TIME (*MARYAM-I-DAURAN*), FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING THE PROMENADE FROM THIS ABODE OF GRIEF INTO THE HEAVENLY GARDENS OF RIZWAN.

*Preamble*

The world is an extremely pleasant paradise
But it is a garden hedged round with thorns.

Without the thorn of heart-piercing adversity,
From this garden no rose of pleasure may be torn.

When Divine Will undertook to accomplish the affairs of the workshop of the world and the administration of the Abode of the Caliphate of Adam, perfect Divine Wisdom demanded that, **[p. 446]** in every age, some should hasten to the palace of existence from the closet of non-existence; and when they have attained the goal of certain wishes and desires and obtained various types of happiness and misery as long as time permitted and circumstances were favorable, they should again return to the world of eternity. And after that, others should come on the scene, and having roamed for some time in this valley-like compass, in the same way, they should pack up their chattel from this transitory world without any delay, when their time of departure comes. Therefore a blessed wise man is one who does not plant his feet of firmness and constancy in this unstable narrow street; and the angel-natured is one who does not take this demon-inhabited place as his home.

Pleasure, the last stage of good end, and the House of Peace are in another abode and the secure place of rest and comfort is in a different spot. Consequently, the world's bounty is not durable and its comfort not lasting. In the circumstances, the entire universe, from the smallest particle to the Sun, becomes the passing scene of the calamity of annihilation and decline; and the chief objects of existence carry in their wake the disaster of being struck by the evil eye of non-existence:

Very rarely can one recollect in this abode
Joys that last more than a moment.

Pain's sum total is greater than that of pleasure,
For the lifespan of joy is just this very moment.

Like nightingales we should weep in this garden,
For smiles fade too quickly from the face.

It is on account of this that all the good of this heart-ravishing place is not worth relying upon; nor is the ease and comfort of this transitory house of annihilation going to last forever. The world's pleasure is hostage to grief and sorrow. Its ecstasy and joy are so mixed up with a thousand types of hardship and anguish on account of this, that to whatever a person's heart becomes attached, annihilation and decline overtake these sooner or later; and the greater the degree of attachment, the more open is the path along which tragedy descends.

The testimony to this state of affairs is the grief-creating event and the tragic occurrence [i.e., death] of the Lady of Holy Titles, the Queen of laudable qualities, the full measure of abundant benedictions, Maryam of the Time, Rabi'a of the Age, Mumtaz Mahal Begam. **[p. 447]**

Exactly at the moment when that beautiful lady of felicity and good fortune had brightened up the face of the Age, causing the times to become favorable and all things agreeable, when the movement of the revolving sky was in accord with the desire of the mind and attuned with the objects of the heart, the evil eye--which till now kept away from the face of the wakeful fortune of friends of this government and the calamity of the plunder of the world's vicissitudes was restricted to their enemies--struck, and turned the royal pleasure into disturbance and turmoil. And mountains of grief and sorrow confronted the sacred focus (*qibla*) of the world, and the mist of affliction and dust of gloom, rising from the path of intimacy and deep affection which he had for that lady of the ladies of the world, settled on that clear mirror-house, which is the light-repository of holiness and purity and the treasure-vault of deep affection.

And the description of this grief-gathering event, which took place towards the latter part of the night of Wednesday, the 17th of Zi'l-Qa'da 1040 [17 June 1631], corresponding to the 26th of Khurdad, is as follows. Since the time of the predestined event and call incumbent on all humanity had arrived, after the onset of the time of delivery, the labor pains lasted from Tuesday to the midnight of Wednesday; and following the birth of a daughter, the condition of that auspicious-natured lady became worse, weakness overtook her to the highest degree, and gradually the signs of approaching death appeared.

Immediately, through the intermediary of the Princess of the World and refuge of its people, Begam Sahib, she expressed the desire of the presence of His Exalted Majesty (*A'la Hazrat*). And the moment His Majesty heard this sorrowful news, being moved beyond control, he arrived at the head of the bed of his companion and confidante of long-standing, in the most agitated and restless manner; and by this last viewing and final meeting, he gathered the provision for the long period of separation. And that Queen of high birth, with heart full of pain and mind replete with remorse, weepingly carried out the ceremonies of bequest and farewell, and entreated kindness and favor to be shown to the royal Princes and Princesses, and in consideration towards her parents. And when three watches (*gharis*) of the said night still remained, having heeded the call of the Beckoner of "*Return Thou*" [Qur'an] with the ear of resignation and willingness, she passed on to the mercy of God; and walking gracefully with the chaste Houris in the pavilions [of Paradise], **[p. 448]** she took repose in the palaces of those eternal gardens along with the Houri-eyed ones.

And all the Queen-consorts of the seraglio of the Caliphate, having waited upon His Majesty to discharge the ceremonies of condolences, moved the earth and time [with their mourning]; and having added to the grief and adorned the sorrow of the world with their soul-melting cries and grief-stricken lamentations, they turned the joy-house of the world into the calamity-house of grief and sorrow. And complete disruption and great disorder found access to the august mind, restraining him from the performance of the important occupations of the Caliphate.

The mist of anguish and distress so much affected the august temperament that he did not for long years derive any enjoyment from colorful clothes, dresses, songs, scents of new invention; and during the holding of assemblies on the occasion of the two 'Id festivals, the weighing ceremonies, and other times, tears would involuntarily flow from his august eyes. And on this account, the mist of grief having clouded the eyes through being deprived of the view of that grief-dispelling one [Mumtaz Mahal], the gates of manifest and hidden joy became closed to him.

*Temporary Burial in the Zainabad Garden, and Account of Shah Jahan's Grief*

To be brief, after the body of that one shrouded by cupolas of chastity was interred on a temporary basis (*amanat*) in the garden of Zainabad on the other side of the river Tapti, at the close of [the following] Thursday, His Majesty went to the illumined grave (*marqad*) of that adorner of the chief seat in Paradise; and having poured oceans of lustrous pearls of tears on that holy grave (*turbat*), he returned in felicity after reciting the *Fatiha* and distributing alms and charity [for the merit of the deceased], deciding that he would henceforth go every night of Friday in this very manner to visit the grave enclosure (*hazira*) of that Lady of exalted position.

Without any semblance of exaggeration, patience and tranquility departed from the sum-total of the world's repose on account of this grief-gathering event; and anguish accumulated to such an extent that the marks of the grief and remorse of His Majesty affected all the people of the world. And when powerlessness and anguish had thoroughly shaken that cause of the firmness (*tamkin*) of the universe of time and space, these conditions also crept into the angelic world at large. And the harvest of patience and repose of an entire world did not produce even one barley-grain worth of endurance in the vortex of the destructive wind of powerlessness and anguish:

> **[p. 449]** The grief of the king is the grief of the country;
> It has power over everybody, independently.
>
> The pain of the king causes pain to the entire world,
> Turning the bright day into darkness.
>
> Consider the entire world a body (*kalbud*),
> Of which the crowned one [the king] is the head.
>
> If pain of the foot causes the body to deteriorate,
> What may result when the head suffers?

Without exaggeration or hyperbole, it may be said that no genuine or true lover (*muhibb*) has ever displayed in performing the rites of condolence and mourning on

the death of faithful, agreeable, and worthy (*arjumand*) persons, such degrees of grief and anguish as emanated from His Majesty in the observance of all the rules (*adab*) of mourning of that dear loved one. For, from the date of death of that Lady of high worth, having shunned all carnal pleasures, he was not free from grief and sorrow even for a moment, during day or night. At the times of observing the death anniversary, and particularly on the days of marriage, 'Id festivals, and other such occasions, when the exalted Royal Palace (*daulat-khana*) would be beautified with decorations, the place of that companion would appear unoccupied to the august eye, he would uncontrollably shed tears and display so much anguish and grief that the participants in the assembly and those present at the time would all at once be totally shaken at witnessing his state, and themselves started weeping and wailing.

He used to say often: "The sovereignty of the world and pleasure of kingship which I used to crave with her existence, now without her is the cause of increase in grief and anguish, and it does not bring pleasure to look at the face of anyone; and from the mind-eroding excess of pain of separation, participating in the assembly of the Time, the apparatus of the Empire, and pleasurable pursuits no longer produces any worthwhile result, only weariness and pain."

Hence, for long years in every month of Zi'l-Qa'da having put on white attire (*libas-i-kafuri*) like dawn, he did not omit anything in the observance of the rites of mourning and condolence. And from among those present in the assembly, none had the power to put on other dress that was not in imitation of His Majesty.

*Eulogy of the Queen*

Verily, **[p. 450]** the occasion demanded that during the mourning for that Lady of the Time, on account of her personal virtues and qualities of self-enacted excellence, more than these rites of mourning should have been observed. The preordained bond of intimacy and deep affection, which had developed in accordance with the mutual acquaintance and compatibility expressed in the divine pledge on the day of creation [*ahd-i-alast*; lit.,"Am I not your Lord?"], and which had generated greater attraction in this world, strengthening and fortifying the bond, was absent with respect to his other wives, the pure daughter of Muzaffar Husain Mirza Safavi and the noble daughter of Shahnawaz Khan, son of 'Abd al Rahim Khan Khanan, to such an extent as would cause great grief and pain to the benevolent heart. Apart from the firm bond of attachment and dependency (*dilbasti u ta'alluq*), that Lady of pure manners constantly strived to please the heart and seek the good pleasure of His Majesty; and in all circumstances, she fulfilled the duties of utmost service and extreme servitude. And having been a friend and companion in joy and sorrow and well-being and grief, she did not leave any stone unturned in pleasing him.

*Account of the Royal Offspring*

Notwithstanding this, the burden of entrustment (*amanat*) by the monarch of the age was carried by her [i.e., she became pregnant by him] fourteen times. Out of these, four sons and three daughters went to adorn the assembly of the highest heaven and give company to the houri-eyed nymphs of Paradise; while four sons and three daughters, who are the seven stars of the sphere of good fortune and all the

embodiment of the beauty of the beloved person of dignity and glory, now decorate the border of the weeks, months and year of time.

*First*: the first fruit of the tree of the government and water of the pearl of chastity and modesty, Jahanara Begam Sahib.

*Second*: the auspicious star of the sphere of success and worthy gem of the casket of kingship, the one possessing high temperament and seeker of happiness, Prince Muhammad Dara Shikoh.

*Third*: the ornament of the crown of government and luck and decoration of the assembly of honor and glory, the superscribed royal signature (*tughra*) of the royal order (*manshur*) of creation, Shah Shuja'.

*Fourth*: the fruit of the tree of government and precious casket of chastity, Raushan Ara Begam.

*Fifth*: third pillar of the caliphate, star of the zenith of respect and magnificence and the one approved of by the august eyes of heaven, the lord (*sahib*) of blessed fortune and pomp of Faridun, the prince of perfectly apportioned allotment and complete share [of fortune], Sultan Muhammad Aurangzeb.

*Sixth*: the fresh flower of the rose-garden of Adam and the picture (*nagsh*) of the desire of the world, Murad Bakhsh.

*Seventh*: **[p. 451]** the last offering of Her Majesty the Queen, Gauhar Ara Begam.

It is hoped that as long as the world is in place, and the sphere lasts, may the pivot of the beauty and elegance of Time (*rozgar*) rest on these seven planets of the zenith of honor and worth.

At the time when this world-consuming event took place, from the age of that divinely pardoned one, 38 solar years and two months, and 39 lunar years, four months and four days had passed. Her auspicious birth had occurred on the 19th of Rajab 1001 [15 April 1593], corresponding to the 28th of Farwardin; and at the age of twenty, she had been honored with the felicity of the honor of marrying this bestower of the ornament on the Crown and Throne, and became the decorated medallion (*shamsa*) of the portico (*aiwan*) of sovereignty and the canopy of the assembly of caliphate for nineteen lunar years, eight months and nine days, equivalent to nineteen solar years, one month and six days. The date of the death of that Lady of the Age was found, according to truth and reckoning (*haq-wa-hisab*), by Bebadal Khan, thus:

"May the abode of Mumtaz Mahal be Paradise"
(*ja-i-Mumtaz Mahal jannat bad* = 1040)

*Legacy of the Queen*

**[p. 452]** His Majesty the Shadow of the Glorified God, granted half of the entire estate (*matrukat*) of that pardoned one taken into divine mercy, totaling more than one crore rupees in gold coins (*ashrafi*), ornaments, jewels, and so forth, to Begam Sahib, and half to the other royal offspring. And adding four lakhs of rupees, half in cash and half in fief (*jagir*) to the fixed annual stipend (*saliyana*) of that one of holy veil, which had been previously six lakhs of rupees, all the affairs of the government which had been assigned to Her Majesty the Queen were now entrusted to this Lady of the Time (*sahiba-i-zaman*).

The *Diwani* and *Mir Samani* [of the Princess] were given to Ishaq Beg Yazdi, who had been the overseer (*mustasaddi*) of the establishment (*sarkar*) of that deceased one; and the post (*khidmat*) of chief assistant and discharging of the duties of the inner apartments (*mahal*) were assigned to Satti Khanan, as before.

## 3.4. KALIM, *PADSHAH NAMA*

*Preamble*

(1) **[fol. 104a]** Behold, how aptly said by the afflicted one,
Whom Time has wounded with its tyranny,

(2) The sphere's cycle has inclined so low,
As to become jealous of what it itself has bestowed.

(3) Since the disposition of the Age is such,
Take nothing from this world except your leave.

(4) Do not cling to what you must give back,
For the pain of separation sears the heart.

(5) Severing your heart from a desire unfulfilled
Is far better than surrendering the one achieved.

(6) If through calamity, the seed of one's hope
Did not sprout from the earth of desire,

(7) He would not be as consumed with despair,
As when the Age sets fire to the harvest.

(8) In truth, the heart separated from its desire,
Burns with remorse, like the inebriate whose wine has overturned.

(9) However briefly the heart draws a thing into its affection,
Separation causes it to receive the rust of affliction.

(10) To the wise, the desire for the world
Is like an arrow, its seeker like a bow:

(11) Fate unites the arrow with the bow
For the purpose of separation, not repose.

(12) Do not get entangled in this friendship,
And do not be a target of the arrow of separation.

(13) The desires which you cherish in your heart
Are like the grains in the skirt of a sower of seeds,

(14) Which have come together only to be scattered:

One ought not to rejoice at receiving them temporarily.

(15) Ultimately the world shall take back, one by one,
Everything it has lent to its offspring;

(16) Yet from among the heart's desires,
It first steals away what is most cherished.

(17) Heaven rarely, out of jealousy, assaults
Those whose affairs are not happily arranged;

(18) Were stones to rain from the heavens,
The glass-maker would incur the greatest loss.

(19) If the Age appears to give some respite,
Its reason is simply to lie in wait,

(20) Until Fortune smiles upon your affairs,
So it might blow all away with the wind of jealousy.

(21) In truth, the comfort of this House is like fire,
Which is never free from the smoke of affliction;

(22) The breeze that enlivens your heart,
Also throws a handful of dust in your eyes.

(23) The same candle that gives light to your lodging
Also burns it to the ground.

(24) **[fol. 104b]** The water that causes your seeds to flourish
Shall eventually wash away your house.

(25) Assuming that there is comfort unaccompanied by sorrow,
It will soon disappear like a spark.

(26) It may flash before your eyes, but evade your grasp;
Happy is the foresighted one who closes his eyes to it.

(27) Heaven is the enemy of all flourishing affairs,
It casts a chill upon the heated market.

*Death of the Queen and Grief of Shah Jahan*

(28) The unkind Age, whose profession is tyranny,
Thus behaved with the King, the Sahib Qiran.

(29) During the period when that justice-dispensing Emperor
Had his camp in the Burhanpur city,

(30) The times were then in accord with the wishes of the King of Kings,
And achieving his desires was his only hunting pastime.

(31) From every direction, news of victory and conquest
Were constant harbingers of joy.

(32) He attained his heart's desires from the movement of the stars,
Like an intoxicated person from circulation of the wine-cup.

(33) The head of his desires lay in the lap of fulfillment;
His quest had become a resident in the lane of attainment.

(34) But all of a sudden, capricious Time
Cast a different color on the face of his affairs.

(35) The Age became jealous of his happiness,
And torrents of tears swept away laughter from his lips.

(36) That merry-making turned into grief,
And the garment of joy acquired the indigo hue of mourning.

(37) Trouble-natured Time removed the happy heart,
And replaced it with a despondent mind.

(38) The musicians departed the pleasure assembly,
Leaving their place to be filled by mourners.

(39) That candle from the bedchamber of the King's love,
Who was more exalted (*mumtaz*) than both sun and moon,

(40) Time carried away to the assembly of celestial beings,
Consigning the entire world to darkened days.

(41) The autumn of death assailed that flower,
By which the revolving heavens recognized the garden.

(42) If death had any modesty in its nature,
It would have hidden itself from people, out of shame.

(43) By the death of that Bilqis of the royal abode,
The Solomon of the Age became acquainted with grief.

(44) With a precious pearl from the cloud of honor,
That precious oyster was pregnant.

(45) Just as she handed over that load of trust to the world,
She herself began her journey to the garden of paradise.

(46) In Zi'l-Qa'da of the year one thousand and forty,
This event came as a calamity to patience and the heart.

(47) Sixteen days had elapsed from the month,
When on the seventeenth night, this fateful event came to pass.

(48) From the King of Kings of high birth,

She had taken in her embrace fourteen Princes and Princesses.

(49) Of these, seven departed to the garden of paradise,
The remaining seven continue to adorn the kingdom of existence.

(50) And four of these are worthy of the crown and the throne,
While three repose behind the curtain of chastity.

(51) On account of grief, the emperor seated himself in mourning.
His two eyes showered forth more pearls than his hands [of bounty].

(52) Anguish alone went to console the monarch,
And only the burning heart was solicitous of his sighs.

(53) From successive waves of sorrow, wrinkles of grief appeared
Spreading across the sun of his face like so many crescents.

(54) **[fol. 105a]** Lamentation is an inseparable companion of incontrollable tears,
Like torrents gushing forth from the mountain range.

(55) The King of Kings cried out with grief,
Like an ocean raging with storm.

(56) And that ocean of dignity was suddenly separated
From the pearls of its endurance, patience and control.

(57) On the mountain of his dignity, lamentation reverberated like an echo,
Never fading away, even for a moment.

(58) The aggrieved heart lost its control--
How can wine remain when the goblet is broken?

(59) His yearning intensified due to the termination of union,
For longing increases in periods of dearth.

(60) Within that heart containing miles (*farsang*) of distress,
Why was there so little room for peace and tranquility?

(61) The horde of grief encircled the King's heart,
Like the congregation of pilgrims around the Ka'ba.

(62) The dust of his heart's vexation was apparent on his face,
Like the resplendent sun undergoing an eclipse.

(63) Dignity attempted to retain firmness in his mind,
But the goblet of his heart became broken.

(64) The burning heart was unable to suppress its sighs,
For the chafing dish cannot prevent smoke from rising.

(65) His heart became disinterested in the task of ruling over the world,

It took its residence in the corner of grief and pain.

(66) His heart and hand grew tired of Kingship,
The flower of the garden of holiness withered.

(67) The color of youth flew away from his cheeks;
The flower of his countenance ceased blooming.

(68) Joy no longer appeared on his face,
His lips would not part in smile.

(69) From all the four directions, grief faced the King,
For his solace-giver had passed away.

(70) From troops and retinue came lamentations and sighs,
Which were all that now suited the King's disposition.

(71) From this heart-trampling pain, for two to three years,
He was so overwhelmed by grief and sorrow,

(72) That he listened neither to musicians play nor singers sing,
Whether in the times of festivity or on 'Id days.

(73) His tearful eyes sought help from spectacles,
For his eyesight had decreased because of weeping.

(74) His pool of tears became a mirror of his mind and heart,
Although water is usually harmful to a mirror.

(75) In his beard before this, no white hairs
Did the eyes see, except a few.

(76) But in this paining of the heart, most turned so white,
That the morn of bliss was shamed by their whiteness.

(77) His raiment became white because of continuous tears;
The white garb of mourning came to Hindustan.

(78) In their grief, the exalted Princes and Princesses
And grandees of this everlasting regime,

(79) Donned in sorrow garments of mourning,
And placed the hand of dejection upon their heads.

(80) In accordance with the tradition of mourning, the King of Kings
Divested his body of colorful clothing.

(81) In truth, colorful dress came to be such a defect and disgrace,
That the nature of the world also abandoned colorfulness.

(82) The cheek became embarrassed by the color of shame,
And did not consider it proper to put on red.

(83) Twilight also forgot to wear red garb,
And instead donned a robe of thorns and straw.

(84) The disturbance and distress of the King's heart
Turned the world dark in people's eyes.

(85) The King of Kings held long-standing love for her,
The treasury of his heart was full of her affection.

(86) That tree of hope, which for twenty years
Grew in the garden of his imagination,

(87) How could he cut off his affection,
Since its veins and roots have interwoven with his heart and soul.

(88) **[fol. 105b]** The second Sahib Qiran had such a bond with her,
As could not be grafted to exposition and description.

(89) Although their bond of affection lasted long,
The King of Kings experienced nothing displeasing from her;

(90) No dust from her behavior ever settled
On the mirror of the emperor's mind.

(91) In all situations, she was conversant with the temperament of the king:
His companion during travels, and a source of solace at home.

(92) The flower's bond with fragrance is not so enduring,
As was the King's love for her.

(93) She was always seeking to please the King;
She knew full well the King of King's temperament.

(94) Despite her power as the consort of the King,
She always displayed conformity and obedience [to him].

*Temporary Burial in the Zainabad Garden*

(95) Her pure body, conjoined with divine mercy,
Was temporarily entrusted in the earth.

(96) The Zainabad garden became its trust-keeper,
And rays of divine mercy became a lamp over her grave.

(97) As long as the king kept his residence in Khandesh,
He made it obligatory upon himself every Friday night,

(98) To pay a visit to her pure resting place,
And to shed showers of tears on its earth.

(99) As soon as he cast his shadow on that grave,
The moisture of his weeping would penetrate her shroud (*kafan*).

(100) Like the rain of mercy, on that pure dust,
He would shower tears from his aching heart.

(101) His two eyes competed with each other,
Each claiming to shed a larger share of the heart's blood.

3.5. KALIM, *DIWAN*

*Chronograms of the Queen's Death*

(1) **[p. 48]** When Mumtaz Mahal heard the call from God,
Mumtaz Mahal forthwith cut herself off from all and everything.

Ridwan in Paradise, for the date [of death], said,
"*Mumtaz Mahal selected Paradise as her abode*" [1040].

(2) **[p. 260]** A valuable (*arjumand*) pearl has slipped away from the hand of the king
As a result of which, tears of blood pour ceaselessly from the eye.

At the harvest of both the worlds, Shah Jahan,
It will be strung onto a silk thread.

Twilight no longer dons rose-colored dress,
Now it prefers nothing but black on its bosom.

The overhead sky no longer puts on a golden face,
Through displaying the disks of sun and moon.

The chronogram for this universal calamity has come to be:
"*The dawn no longer smiles due to this grief*" [1040].

2.6. QUDSI, *KULLIYAT*

*Preamble*

(1) **[fol. 77a]** How quickly the Sky forsakes and renounces the sun;
How dejected and melancholy this handful of smoke has become!

(2) The Sky's very appearance is inconstant;
Its azure color hardly endures for a moment.

(3) For its inconstancy, the Sky morning and evening,
Through its revolution, puts forth argument and proof.

(4) In this garden, not a single green leaf grows,
Which the autumnal wind does not cause to yellow and wither.

(5) This garden is so unstable,
Autumn takes precedence over spring.

(6) How many curls and lustrous tresses
Now lie like hyacinth roots beneath the earth!

(7) In this assembly, every candle that is upraised,
Through that very exaltation must melt away.

(8) Pray tell, in this abode of toil and misery,
Who has escaped Death's plundering raid?

(9) For every polished mirror, the mirror-like Sky
Fashions a fate of rusting away.

(10) Even the empire [lit., clay] of China may be broken,
Like the porcelain grasped by the Faghfur's hand.

(11) You will not find a single plant in this garden,
Which does not have decline and fall after it blooms.

(12) Should anyone ever reach the leg of the Divine Throne,
He will ultimately fall from the Throne's portal.

(13) Every joy ends in mourning;
Grief rises from the skirt of every pleasure.

(14) Such is the practice of the azure Sky,
Whatever sword is raised, shall also descend.

(15) What flower is there which did not abandon the garden?
What dromedary is there which has not lost its rider?

*Death of the Queen and Grief of Shah Jahan*

(16) Know for a certainty that the world
Is that very demon who snatched Bilqis from Solomon.

(17) The Divine Decree, which writes with the heart's blood,
Now throws earth on the head of the pen.

(18) Thus, when from the accession coupled with eternity,
The cycle of the Sky had completed four years,

(19) **[fol. 77b]** The Lady of the Age, for the excursion of Paradise,
Changed her residence from this world to the next.

(20) When, in the inevitable grief,
There underwent a change in her noble state of health,

(21) She sent someone to the king of the world:
"O sacred focus (*qibla-gah*) of small and great,

(22) "Now is my last breath and the time for farewell,
"It is the extremity of my mortal woe;

(23) "Take the trouble to come to my bed,
"As my obedient spirit must start its final journey."

(24) When the monarch came to know this news,
He heaved a sigh from his dawn-like breast.

(25) And he set out for his companion's bed,
In order to hear from her those final words.

(26) When Bilqis saw that Solomon of Faith,
The water of remorse and grief flowed from her eyes.

(27) When Bilqis made her departure from this abode of dust,
The Solomon of the Age sat in mourning.

(28) When he was deprived of that rose-bouquet,
He donned white dress like the white rose stem.

(29) The intimates cropped so much hyacinth-scented hair,
That the hyacinth disappeared from the garden.

(30) Scratching the face [in grief] became such a universal preoccupation,
That even the bezels of rings now went unscratched.

(31) The King of Kings gave vent to unrestrained agitation and tumult,
When the ocean surges tempestuously, who will say nay?

(32) No one prevented any other from lamentation,
For each was engaged in that task only.

(33) The commodity of joy, from the Sky to the [world-supporting] fish,
Sank beneath the earth due to slackness in the market.

(34) This sudden grief so overtook the world,
The market of pleasure and joy became sluggish.

(35) Like long syllables in poetry,
The flute of joy had its joints severed.

(36) The musician's instrument went completely out of tune;
Its only sound was the sound of breaking hearts.

(37) The earth thought, from such profusion of indigo robes [of mourning],
That perhaps the blue-colored sky has descended.

(38) When that lamp left the assembly,
The Sky seared the people with brands [of grief].

(39) In the midst of grief, this call from the Angel of the Unseen
Continually reached the ear of the Emperor of Faith:

(40) "If the oyster gets washed ashore from the ocean,
"Pearls remain as its memento.

(41) "If the bud departs the garden,
"Its fruits remain in place with the tree.

(42) "If a mine gives forth no more rubies, and is depleted,
"Its rubies still sparkle like the sun.

(43) "If the couch of Bilqis gets carried away by the wind,
"Let there be perpetuity for Solomon and his offspring.

(44) "Submit to the divine decree; wherefore this grief?
"Who has lived forever in this transitory world?

(45) "Thou art the shadow of the divine Nourisher;
"Let there be no dust on the mirror of your heart.

(46) "May your heart be swept clean of the dust of grief;
"May your grief depart and your joy remain.

(47) "She was possessed of Khadija's qualities and of the stature of Maryam;
"They meet each other now in heaven.

(48) "Beside the led horse, she walked to the highest paradise;
"On account of intense love for Zahra [Fatima], she has joined Zahra.

(49) "From the seed which she sowed yesterday in the world,
"She left behind today some fruits produced from that.

(50) "She absented herself from the world and its people,
"Just as [in this world] she modestly avoided her shadow.

(51) **[fol. 78a]** "As Earth was not a confidante (*mahram*) of her shadow,
"Piety ultimately summoned her to the highest heaven.

(52) "Like a candle, her glance until the last breath,
"Was [modestly] fixed only on her own self."

(53) On the contrary, it behooves the Sky to sit in mourning,
Since a sun-like star has gone from its table!

(54) That pearl of holy temperament, alas!
Such a gem now lies beneath the earth, alas!

(55) Just see whose lamp the Sky has fanned out with its sleeve,
May the coldest wind blow upon its own lamp!

(56) The brain becomes wind-blown by these unpleasant sounds;
May no one's ear again have to hear such a song.

(57) When the pen is taken up to write down this tale,
The tongue of the pen is burned by its own narration.

(58) The versification of this heart-lacerating tale has burned my heart;
Would that its prose text also did not exist!

(59) By penning this unpalatable narration,
Blackness sits in the blood like the brand-mark within the tulip.

*Temporary Burial in the Zainabad Garden*

(60) She departed happily from this abode of dust;
She sat in the canopied litter bound for the gardens of paradise.

(61) The litter-carriers, with pained hearts
Deposited that gold coin (*muhr*) in earth by way of trust (*amanat*).

# 4

# FIRST ROSEWATER FESTIVAL FOLLOWING DEATH

[Curiously, only Qazwini's history makes reference to the celebration, only seventeen days after the death of Mumtaz Mahal, of the Rosewater festival, which was normally a joyous occasion. Missing from both the official history of Lahori and the strongly partisan history of Salih, the passage may have been deliberately excluded by these later writers--perhaps because it seems slightly inconsistent with the overall portrayal of Shah Jahan's excessive grief.]

## 4.1. QAZWINI

**[fol. 235a]** On the 13th of Tir [4 Zi'l-Hijja 1040/4 July 1631], which was the day of the Festival of Roses (*'Id-i-Gulabi*), on account of the soul-rending event of the divinely pardoned lady, the full celebration appropriate to that day was not held. But according to the usual practice, the royal offspring of high worth and Yamin al-Daula Asaf Khan were presented jewel-studded flasks (*surahi*), and the rest of the nobles and grandees, plain and gold-enameled flasks; while the rest of the confidential servants received flasks of porcelain and Aleppan glass, full of rosewater, essence of hyacinth and essence of orange flowers.

# 5

# BODY OF MUMTAZ MAHAL TAKEN TO AKBARABAD FOR BURIAL, AND RETURN OF PRINCE SHAH SHUJA' AND OTHERS TO BURHANPUR

[The following extracts shed new light on three important issues: the nature of the property donated by Raja Jai Singh for the construction of the tomb; the type of temporary grave the body of Mumtaz Mahal's body was first deposited in; and the total cost of construction. The earliest version, by Qazwini, clearly states that Jai Singh donated a "tract of land" (*zamini*), where formerly was the "house" (*khana*) of his grandfather Raja Man Singh. By contrast, the later versions by Lahori and Salih state that a "mansion" (*manzil*) had been or was--the Persian is ambiguous--on the tract of land. All three versions indicate that in exchange for his donation, Jai Singh was awarded what Qazwini calls a "lofty house" (*khana-i-'ala*), but referred to by both Lahori and Salih as a lofty mansion (*manzil*). As will be seen from the document translated in Chapter 37, Jai Singh was ultimately presented with four separate estates or mansions (*haveli*)

[Qazwini and Lahori furnish no specific details about the type of temporary burial, but Salih mentions that the body was quickly interred in a "small domed building" (*gumbadi muktasar*)--a detail that has not been noted by scholars before now.

[All three authors briefly refer to the glorious tomb that had only recently been begun; writing several years later, however, they mention some specific architectural features that took a few years to complete. In quoting the estimates of the architects as to what the projected total cost of the tomb would be, the three authors differ dramatically. The earliest version, by Qazwini, gives an estimate of 20 lakhs; Lahori's figure is 40 lakhs; while the figure of the latest author, Salih, is 50 lakhs--which is the final total cited in both Lahori and Salih at the time of the completion of the entire complex in the sixteenth regnal year, as will be detailed below in Chapter 15.]

## 5.1. QAZWINI

### *Body of the Queen Taken to Akbarabad*

**[fol. 235a]** In short, after six months her blessed corpse was dispatched to the Abode of the Caliphate, Akbarabad, escorted by the branch of the tree of sovereignty and caliphate, prince Sultan Shah Shuja' *Bahadur*, the '*Umdat ul-Mulk* Wazir Khan, and the veiled lady possessing the virtues of Rabi'a, Satti Khanam, who had attained the high rank of first Lady-in-Waiting of that recipient of divine pleasure in Paradise by her laudable services, sincere faith and purity of intention.

As there was on the southern side of Akbarabad, adjoining the city, on the bank of the river Jumna, a tract of land (*zamini*), which formerly (*sabiqa*) was the house (*khana*) of Raja Man Singh, but at this time was in the possession of his grandson Raja Jai Singh, and which from the point of view of eminence and pleasantness appeared to be worthy of the burial of that one whose residence is Paradise, it was selected for this purpose. And the Raja as a token of his sincerity and devotion, donated the said land (*zamin*) and considered this to be the source of happiness. However, His Majesty, in exchange (*iwad*) for that, granted to the Raja a lofty house (*khana-i-'ala*) which belonged to the crown estate. And even though the Raja's

consent was obvious, the Emperor obtained permission for the repose of that companion of the Houris of Paradise.

And it was decided that her auspicious body should be buried in that heart-pleasing land (*zamin*); but until its arrival at the Abode of the Caliphate, everywhere on the roads, there should be distributed food and drink **[fol. 235b]** and innumerable coins should be given in alms to the poor and the deserving. And the prince of the people of this world and his companions, having carried the blessed dead body to the Abode of Caliphate, entrusted it to that holy earth. And having halted in the seat of the kingdom for three or four days, they returned to the exalted court.

And in compliance with the order which is obeyed by the World, the overseers (*mutasaddiyan*) of the affairs of the Abode of Caliphate hurriedly covered the top (*bala*) of that grave (*turbat*), having the signs of divine mercy, so that it remained hidden from the public gaze (*nazar*).

*Foundation of the Tomb*

And in that bountiful and heart-pleasing land (*zamin*) a Paradise-like tomb (*rauza*) was laid out (*tarah afgandand*) and a dome (*gumbad*) of exalted foundation (*buniyan*) and a magnificent edifice (*'imarat*) was founded (*bina nihadand*)--the like and peer of which the eye of Age has not seen beneath these nine vaults of heaven, and the resemblance and equal of which the ear of Time has not heard of in any of the past ages.

And the master artisans (*ustadan-i-sanatgar*) and the architects (*mi'maran*) of discerning [lit., mature] eye have estimated its cost would be 20 lakhs of rupees. And after its completion, it will be the masterpiece (*karnama*) of the days to come, and that which adds to the astonishment of humanity at large.

*Return of Prince Shah Shuja' and Others to Burhanpur*

**[fol. 241a]** On the 6th of Bahman [4 Rajab 1041/26 January 1632], the fruit of the tree of sovereignty and caliphate, the prince of lofty worth Sultan Shah Shuja' Bahadur returned to the royal camp from Akbarabad, along with the *'Umdat ul-Mulk* Wazir Khan and the noble and chaste lady Sitti Khanan, who had, on the [20th] of Azar [17 Jumada I 1041/11 December 1632], gone to the Abode of Caliphate Akbarabad in company with the blessed dead body of the divinely pardoned lady, Her Majesty the Queen, Mumtaz al-Zamani; and they had the honor of kissing the threshold of glory.

5.2. LAHORI

*Body of the Queen taken to Akbarabad*

**[I, p. 402]** On Friday, the 17th of Jumada I 1041 [or 21 Jumada I 1041/15 December 1631?], the holy dead body of the traveler to the realm (*iqlim*) of piety, Her late Majesty the Queen Mumtaz al-Zamani, which had been temporarily (*ba-tariq-i-amanat*) buried, **[p. 403]** was dispatched to the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad, accompanied by the illustrious Prince Muhammad Shah Shuja' Bahadur,

Wazir Khan and Satti al-Nisa Khanan, who had risen, through temperamental compatibility and skill, to the exalted position of chief Lady-in-Waiting and deputyship of that Lady of the world and the Queen of the people of the world. And it was ordered that all along the way, every day abundant food and innumerable silver and gold coins should be given to the needy and the indigent.

As there was a tract of land (*zamini*) of great eminence and pleasantness towards the south of that large city, on which there was before this the mansion (*manzil*) of Raja Man Singh, and which now belonged to his grandson Raja Jai Singh, it was selected for the burial place (*madfan*) of that tenant of Paradise. Even though Raja Jai Singh considered the acquisition (*husul*) of this to be his good fortune and a great success, by way of utmost care, which is absolutely necessary in all important things, particularly in religious matters, a lofty mansion from the crown estates (*khalisa-sharifa*) was granted to him in exchange (*'iwad*).

After the arrival of the dead body in that highly dignified city, on the 15th of Jumada II 1041 [8 January 1632] of the next regnal year, the luminous body of that heavenly essence was consigned to the holy earth. The overseers (*mutasaddiyan*) of the Abode of the Caliphate, under exalted orders, hastily concealed from the public gaze (*nazar*) the heaven-ranked grave (*turbat*) of that world of chastity.

*Foundation of the Tomb*

And plans were laid out (*tarah afganand*) for a magnificent building (*'imarat-i-alishan*) and a dome (*gumbadi*) of lofty foundation (*rafi-'buniyan*), which for height (*dar bulandi*) will, until the Day of Resurrection, remain a memorial to the sky-high aspiration of His Majesty the Second Sahib Qiran and which for strength (*dar ustwari*) will display the firmness of the intentions of its builder. And the far-seeing engineers (*muhandisan*) and art-creating architects (*mi'maran-i-sanat-afrin*) estimated the cost of this building (*'imarat*) would be 40 lakhs of rupees.

## 5.3. SALIH

*Body of the Queen taken to Akbarabad*

**[I, p. 451]** When a period of six months had expired after this grief-gathering event, prince Muhammad Shah Shuja' was appointed to convey the holy dead body of that Queen of angelic temperament to the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad, and Wazir Khan, an old trustworthy servant of the lofty court and the cream of the ladies, Sitti Khanam, who held the post of the deputy (*wikalat*) and chief Lady-in-Waiting of that one of praiseworthy habits, acquired the honors of accompanying the litter encompassed by unlimited pardon and forgiveness; and all along the way, they provided food and largesse to the poor.

After reaching Akbarabad, it was entrusted to earth in the heaven-like tract of land (*sarzamin-i-bihisht-a'in*) situated to the south side of the Abode of the Caliphate, overlooking the river Jumna, which had belonged to Raja Man Singh; and to acquire it, His Majesty, the Caliph-ranked, had given in exchange (*'iwad*) a mansion (*manzil*), loftier than the said mansion, to his grandson Raja Jai Singh. And on the top of the illumined grave, at first in haste (*az ru-i-tajil*), a small domed building (*gumbadi*

*mukhtasar*) was built (*asas nihadand*), so that the eye of a non-confidante (*na-mahram*) does not fall on the holy precincts (*haram*) of the grave of that veiled one of the curtains of chastity.

*Foundation of the Tomb*

Subsequently, in that heaven-like tract of land (*sarzamin*), **[p. 452]** the heavenly plinth (*asman asas*) was laid for a mausoleum (*rauza*) of lofty foundation (*'ala-bunyan*), which, in strength and loftiness and high dignity and magnificence of rank, is the honor of the terrestrial world, which is completely of white marble slabs, and which has arranged round it a pleasing garden having the marks of Paradise. On one side of it, a lofty mosque was built and on the other side, a replica thereof, a guest house (*mihman khana*) of lofty expanse: and on its sides (*atrafash*), there were constructed (*bunyad nazirafta*) rooms (*hujaraha*) and portals (*aiwanha*), and before its gate, several newly fashioned (*nau-a'in*) plazas and joy-increasing sarais (*sara*), which have no like and equal on the surface of the earth in spaciousness of area and novelty of design.

In the space of twenty years [*sic*], that building (*'imarat*), the foundation (*buniyadash*) of which is the eighth layer of the world and whose cap is the tenth roof of the sky, was completed at a cost of 50 lakhs of rupees; and through its extreme loftiness of dignity and rank and excellence of decoration and ornament, it has become the honor of the ancient roof of the azure sky.

*Return of Prince Shah Shuja' and Others to Burhanpur*

**[p. 468]** Among the events of the august court, on the 6th of Bahman [4 Rajab 1041/26 January 1632], the prince of lofty stars Sultan Shuja', who had, on the 24th of Azar [21 Jumada I 1041/15 December 1631], set out for the Abode of Caliphate Akbarabad to escort the holy dead body of the divinely pardoned Lady, Her Majesty the Queen, now returned after the fulfillment of that mission, along with the *'Umdat ul-Mulk* Wazir Khan and the veiled honorable lady Satti Khanam.

## 5.4. KALIM, *PADSHAH NAMA*

[Some verses appear to be missing from Kalim's metrical account; for the Persian text of his verses, see Supplementum 3.4.; for those of Qudsi in this section, see 3.5.]

*Body of the Queen Taken to Akbarabad*

(1) **[fol. 105b]** Accompanying the body, at the ever-obeyed order,
Prince Sultan Shuja' started off [toward Akbarabad].

(2) From among the pillars of the state,
The *'Umdat al-Mulk* and an army also left with him.

(3) When in Akbarabad that holy figure (*naqsh*)
Cast its shadow of bliss upon the earth,

(4) The bank of the Jumna became her resting-place;
She was entrusted to the earth, through God's bounty.

## 5.5. QUDSI, *KULLIYAT*

### *Body of the Queen Taken to Akbarabad*

(1) **[fol. 78a]** When the pure earth of the Beloved's threshold
Had cast off that load of flesh from her mortal frame,

(2) Once again, for taking her towards Agra from that land,
Time gave her a casket [lit., place] of gold.

(3) Since her every bone was gem-like,
It should not surprise if her casket was gold.

(4) The water of the Tapti is still suffering from parchness,
Since such intoxication went away from its bosom.

(5) How can anyone be worthy of such a task?
This work [escorting her body] were better done by a son.

(6) Except for the world-nourishing King of ocean-like generosity,
Who could ask the pearl to transport the oyster?

(7) But however august and omnipotent the ocean,
People hold the pearl more dear.

(8) In this desolate Time, no one knows
The worth of the east better than the sun.

(9) Even though there may be many gardeners to tend the garden,
No one knows the worth of the rose-bush like the rose.

(10) The stars feel jealous of the sun;
Yes, the bubble aspires to become an ocean.

(11) At the orders of the King, obeyed by the Sky,
Shah Sultan Shuja', the rose of the garden of faith--

(12) Already in those days a fortunate prince,
Possessing honor and respect beyond reckoning--

(13) Along with a group of select personal attendants of pure faith,
Who were worthy of confidence and trust,

(14) Were appointed by the Emperor of Faith,
To carry that gem in its casket.

(15) And upon the way, men of piety were to recite the holy Qur'an,
Mornings and evenings, with all respect and honor.

(16) And thus in obedience to the divine edict,
They set out along the road toward Akbarabad.

(17) While proceeding on their way, reciting words of praise to God,
They followed each other, like fingers reciting *tasbih*.

(18) When the entourage neared Agra,
The world became dark and black in the eyes of its people.

(19) Men and women of the city, from among the subjects and attendants,
Applied the indigo of grief to their faces.

(20) **[fol. 78b]** You may say, on account of the indigo (*nil*) of annihilation,
Stretching mile after mile, the river Nile (*nil*) has come out from Egypt,

(21) The face [of the world] was scratched from both sides,
Causing two oceans of blood to meet each other.

(22) From all sides there resounded wailing cries,
Asking where the oyster of the pearl-ocean had gone.

(23) They stationed themselves along the Jumna's bank,
A place of great beauty, like the Paradise of both worlds.

(24) They opened up the bosom of the earth
And concealed that pure pearl therein.

(25) What kind of seed is a human being consigned to the grave,
That till Resurrection does not raise its head from the earth?

(26) They constructed an edifice like the highest heaven,
And raised its head to the sky.

# 6

# FIRST 'URS, HELD AT THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE NEW TOMB

[The exact date of the first 'Urs is not stated in the histories, which merely observe that Shah Jahan did not enter the city of Akbarabad on his return from Burhanpur until after 1 Zi'l-Hijja 1041/19 June 1632; hence the observance was at least two weeks late--which deviation from custom probably accounts for the silence of the historians as to the date. In any event, elaborate preparations were made, and great tents and canopies set up in the "courtyard" (*sahn*) of the tomb (*rauza*). Since work had started on the permanent tomb only six months before, it seems unlikely, but not impossible, that the 'Urs was held on the foundations; perhaps the first observance was still at the temporary grave.]

## 6.1. TABATABA'I

**[fol. 8b]** Among the outstanding events of these times having good end is the holding of the assembly of public feeding and general disbursal of alms for the rest and repose of the soul and spirit, and the tranquillity, gladness and exhilaration, of that Lady of the ladies of the world, and the chief of all womankind in Paradise.

And at this time [ca. 4 Zi'l-Hijja 1041/22 June 1632], by the grace of the approach and blessing of the arrival of that one possessed of the hand of Moses and the breath of Jesus, the eminent Abode of the Caliphate [Akbarabad] had put to shame the fourth heaven and become the envy of the loftiest sphere. And moreover, by chance, a period of one year had elapsed since the occurrence of the sudden death of the Lady Mumtaz al-Zamani, and the time had arrived for observing the customary ceremony, known in this country as 'Urs, when at the occasion of every aniversary of the death date of the departed ones, to insure the greater rest and lasting tranquillity of those who have taken up residence in the vicinity of divine mercy, they spend one whole night and day in observances--such as keeping awake the entire night, repeating holy phrases (*zikr*), reciting the Qur'an, the Fatiha and prayers seeking forgiveness for the departed ones, feeding the poor and giving alms to the needy.

Consequently, in accordance with the dictates of [His Majesty's] bountiful nature--which continuously seeks any pretext to perform beneficial acts and to distribute alms to all kinds of needy and destitute persons, especially on occasions such as this--assignments were made to the dispensers of the affairs of the government and the goods-fashioners of the workshops (*karkhana*) of the kingdom, to make the necessary arrangements for the occasion. And acting in compliance with the royal order, they set up in the courtyard (*sahn*) of the auspicious mausoleum (*rauza*) heaven-like tents (*khaima-ha*), each one of which could be an excellent substitute for the *dalbadal*, and on their sides and borders there were erected canopies of painted gold-brocade velvet, each one of which **[fol. 9a]** in width and colorfulness boasted its equal status with the brightness of dawn and the colorfulness of twilight.

When the expanse of the courtyard of that assembly had been covered over with different kinds of canopies and variegated carpets, even the heavenly expanse was surpassed, while the earth's own carpet and the world's expansive surface both were caused to hide their heads in shame. On the surrounding periphery, smaller tent

chambers and variegated tent screens were raised, the compass pole of each one of which was in no way inferior to the encircling horizon itself.

A large congregation obtained access to this important assembly, including the great nobles, high ranking *mansabdars*, grandees and great men, and the elite and laymen of the Abode of the Caliphate, as well as all the men of noble lineage (*ashraf*), the leading men, saintly persons and ordinary citizens who had flocked to offer their congratulations for the recent string of unending victories and His Majesty's recent return to [the capital of] Akbarabad of fortunate foundation.

All the scholars and learned and saintly persons, and the important religious leaders [lit., those wearing large turbans], both invited and uninvited, had the honor of being present at this public assembly. And His Majesty, whose august person is the asylum of the Caliphate, having retired in seclusion and holy privacy, passed that blessed night in keeping awake in practicing devotion and in praying for the absolution of that one who has returned to the abode of divine pardon. And in that exalted assembly, the podium (*sadr*) was adorned with the presence of Yamin al-Daula; the [Iranian] ambassador Muhammad 'Ali Beg; the grandees of the empire and the pillars of the state. And the rest of the chiefs and leading persons, and all of the ordinary citizens took their places in the assembly in accordance with their different ranks and official positions.

And having spread the bountiful banquet-cloth, the stewards of the royal household of the government workshops and the table-deckers of dainty dishes served in courses varieties of food, such as beverages, sweetmeats and other tidbits, confections, fruits, aromatic essences and *pan*; they then invited all and sundry to partake of the special feast delicacies, with the result that rich and poor alike took advantage of [lit., carried away food from] this table of bounty.

In short, an amount of 50,000 rupees was bestowed in charity among the deserving people. And when the exalted men's assembly concluded, another assembly at the Illumined Tomb was held for all the begams, occupiers of the couches of the seraglio (*harem*), and the veiled ones of the royal bedchamber, who also came to circumambulate the holy resting place of that Houri-natured lady of pious temperament. And admission to the women's assembly--which was held on the same scale and in the same special manner [as the men's]--was open to all the women in general and the needy in particular. Another sum of 50,000 rupees was distributed among the chaste and deserving women. And an exalted general proclamation received the ornament of issuance, to the effect that every year on the day of the 'Urs of that pardoned one, the overseers (*mutasaddiyan*) in charge of accounts should expend in charity the very same amounts, provided that His Majesty was physically present in the Abode of the Caliphate; otherwise, half of the total amount should be distributed among the different classes of deserving men and women.

### 6.2. QAZWINI

**[fol. 250b]** As one year had passed since the sad demise of that divinely pardoned lady, Her Majesty Mumtaz al-Zamani, the resplendent mind of His Majesty the Second Sahib-i-Qiran fixed its attention on the arrangements for the customary banquet ceremony--called 'Urs in the parlance of Hindustan--which is held in

observance of death anniversaries. By imperial order, the overseers in charge of the royal household affairs (*muttasaddiyan-i-buyutat*) in this august government proceeded to set up tents (*khaima-ha*) of heaven-like majesty in the courtyard (*sahn*) of the Illumined Tomb (*rauza-i-munavvara*); and having encircled the area with smaller tent enclosures (*saracha*), they spread out decorated carpets and provided such an abundance of food, beverages, dried fruits, sweetmeats, and perfumed essences as to defy the imagination.

And having convened various learned scholars, saintly and pious persons, and those who had committed the Qur'an to memory (*huffaz*), an assembly was held, the like of which the eye of the revolving heavens had never before witnessed in any age. Those in attendance at this august congregation included all the amirs and other grandees and distinguished persons who were members of the royal entourage [lit., attached to the royal stirrups], as well as the great concourse of people from all parts of the empire who had experienced happiness by appearing at the court of His August Majesty, to offer their congratulations on the recent victories in the Deccan and the return of the glorious imperial standards from the three-year-long expedition there. And having recited the Fatiha for the forgiveness of "that one enveloped in divine mercy," they kept awake the whole night and devoted themselves to the ceremonies of offering prayers and reciting the Qur'an.

His August Majesty having retired in privacy, Yamin ud-Daula Asaf Khan along with pillars of the state and elites of government and Muhammad 'Ali Beg the [Iranian] ambassador headed that heaven-resembling assembly and the rest of the grandees: and the elite and the servants of the courts having the impression of the heavenly sphere took their seats in order of their grades of honor and importance. The attendants of the glorious court, having laid out the table of bounties, opened wide the door of serving victuals to noble and peasant alike. And they laid out such a spread of victuals, that for their narration the expanse of description is too narrow. Since the time when the host of the sky has adorned the table of the earth with unlimited various bounties, no one has witnessed such a table of bounties; **[fol. 251a]** and ever since the table-decker of Destiny put the lid of the sky on the tray of the earth, no created being has spread the like of that table.

And out of the total amount of one lakh of rupees which had been set aside for bestowing in charity and alms, 50,000 rupees were distributed in that exalted assembly among the poor and the deserving men, and the remaining 50,000 rupees were distributed in another assembly which was exclusively restricted to the veiled ones of the curtains of chastity [i.e., the ladies of the palace] and pious and chaste women. And it was decided that thenceforth, every year when His Majesty remains in person in the Abode of the Caliphate [Akbarabad], 50,000 rupees, and in the years when the glorious standards shift to other parts, 12,000 rupees should be spent on the occasion of the 'Urs of that pardoned one--half bestowed on the needy men and half on the needy women.

## 5.3. LAHORI

**[I, p. 429]** Since at this time, when the Abode of the Caliphate [Akbarabad] had become the rising place of the rays of the crescent of the world-traversing standards, one year had completely elapsed after the sorrowful event [of the death] of the one

whose cupola is the Sky, namely Her late Majesty the Queen, a lofty order had the honor of being issued that the ceremonies which are arranged on the day of death--which is colloquially called 'Urs by the people of Hindustan--should be performed for that one enshrined by divine favors. The overseers of the affairs of the household (*mutasaddiyan-i-buyutat*) erected sky-high tents (*khaima-ha*) in the court (*sahn*) of the Illuminated Tomb (*rauza-i-munavvar*), and drew up sky-touching canopies (*suradiq*) around them and spread a carpet which bewilders the eyes of world-traveling people.

And an assembly, which the infinite-eyed heaven had not seen even in dreams, was held and it was filled with bounty from the monarch of truthful foundation (*haqiqat-asas*). The great nobles, distinguished elite (*ashraf*), the learned, the pious, the shaikhs and the memorizers of the Qur'an, having been according the honor of being present in that exalted assembly, recited the Fatiha for invoking forgiveness on that one of holy station. On account of the large number and multitude of people, His Most Exalted Majesty, added luster to seclusion [i.e., retired to a secluded place] and ordered Yamin ud-Daula to sit in that assembly (*mahfil*) which is the descending place of divine bounty, along with other pillars of the state, Muhammad 'Ali Beg, the [Iranian] ambassador, the people at large and the elite; and the order of ranks was to be observed in seating. The helpers and servers, having laid out the sky-spread cloths, placed so many different kinds of food and beverages **[p. 430]** and sweetmeats and perfumes that, in the field of writing, the swift-moving chestnut horse of the pen of narration is inadequate, and for the praise of whose particulars, the spaciousness of description is too narrow.

And out of the total of one lakh of rupees which had been assigned for charity and alms, 50,000 rupees were granted to the deserving and needy men in that assembly; and on the next day, the other half was bestowed on the pious and chaste ladies and deserving women. And it was ordered that after that, in the years when the expanse of the Abode of the Caliphate [Akbarabad] is illuminated through the rays of the sky-touching standards, 50,000 rupees, and in the years when the phoenix of the lofty canopy, with its precious shadow, adds to the auspiciousness of other places, 12,000 rupees should be distributed among the deserving men and women for the solace of the holy soul of that traveler to the land of piety.

### 6.4. SALIH

[Salih's account of the First 'Urs (Vol. l, pp. 489-91) is identical to that of Tabataba'i given above in section 6.1.]

# 7

# SECOND 'URS, AND TEMPORARY INSTALLATION OF GOLD RAILING SURROUNDING GRAVE

[By the time of the Second 'Urs in May 1633, great progress in the construction of the tomb had obviously been made, for the histories state that the observance took place on top of the plinth platform (*chabutara-i-kursi*), although the foundations of the domed hall (*gumbad*) had not yet come up. The most noteworthy feature of the 'Urs was the newly installed gold railing around the grave, which had just been completed by Bebedal Khan, Superintendent of the royal goldsmiths establishment, using 40,000 tolas of gold worth six lakhs of rupees--or more than one-eighth of the ultimate total cost of 50 lakhs for the entire tomb complex.]

## 6.1. TABATABA'I

### [fol. 43a] EVENTS OF THE MONTH OF KHURDAD

On the 3rd of the month of Khurdad, which corresponded with Thursday, the 17th of Z'il-Qa'da 1042 [26 May 1633], there was held at the Illumined Tomb the assembly of the annual reading of the entire Qur'an, commonly known in this country as the 'Urs, for the merit of that Lady abiding in the cupolas of divine forgiveness, Her Late Majesty the Queen (*Mahad 'Ulya*). And on the upper surface of that "grave-podium" (*takht-gahi*), which serves as the proper plinth (*kursi-i-asl*) of that holy mausoleum (*hazira-i-quds*), there were set up large tents, around which wide canopies (*shamiyana-ha*) were also raised.

And spread out over the entire floor of that platform (*chabutara*) were multi-colored and figured carpets, upon which a heaven-like assembly, with a seating capacity of one thousand participants, was arranged with all elegance and beauty.

And Bebadal Khan, the superintendent of the royal goldsmith establishment (*darogha-i-zargarkhana*), submitted for the inspection of His Majesty a recently completed golden screen (*mahjar zarini*), on which 40,000 *tolas* of gold had been expended, and which was decorated with inscriptions and floral designs in wonderfully wrought enamel-work; as well as various enameled golden constellation-orbs (*kaukaba*) and hanging lamps. And in compliance with the lofty decree, that railing screen was installed around the illumined resting place and the constellation-orbs and lamps were suspended around it.

And in the evening, that illustrious mausoleum became as it were the replica of the expansive mount of Sinai, through the shining reflection of the radiant presence of that candle of the bed chamber of the glorious Caliphate, the first lady of the royal seraglio of this great kingdom, the Princess of the world and its people, Begam Sahib [Jahanara]. **[fol 43b]** And likewise, the rest of the begams and the veiled ones behind the tents of magnificence, having come to go round that resting place, which the angels also circumambulate, kept awake the whole night in that place. And the next morning, His Majesty, the asylum of the caliphate, having added to the felicity of

that blessed mausoleum by the bounty of his holy arrival, remained until the afternoon in that heart-pleasing place in the company of those descendants of the celestial Houris.

And thereafter, having returned to the great Abode of the Caliphate, at the close of that day, he again graced the assembly with his happy, august, and blessed presence. For two and one-half hours [one *pahar* and one *ghari*] of the night, he solicited pardon for the departed one through prayer and recitation of the Fatiha, and afterwards distributed the sum of 25,000 rupees among the deserving men. And having bestowed another 25,000 in charity to the needy and distressed women, he also conferred numerous robes of honor (*khila't*), comprising open vests and shawls, as well as gifts of cash, upon the learned, the pious, those who had committed the Qur'an to memory (*huffaz*), and those masters of Qur'anic recitation (*qaris*)--who had already completed several full recitations (*khatm*) of the glorious Qur'an, for the purpose of invoking pardon and soliciting divine mercy for the departed one.

And in that one night and day, there was consumed such a vast quantity of various types of food, beverages, sweetmeats and confections, and *pan* and perfumed essences, as to defy calculation; indeed the estimate of its worth and the assessment of its quantity are beyond even the measuring-stick of conjecture, let along actual weighing scales. And even the sycophants who carried away provender and the greedy hoarders of provisions accumulated such a store of complacency that, by grinning with the teeth of the letter *sin* in the word *istighna* ("sufficiency"), they sealed the mouth of the letter *'ain* in the word *tam'* ("greed"), and the letter *ha* in the word *sharah* ("avarice").

## 7.2. QAZWINI

**[fol. 274a]** In short, on Thursday, the 17th of the month of Z'il-Qa'da 1042 [26 May 1633], corresponding to the 6th of Khurdad, the assembly of the 'Urs anniversary of the divinely pardoned Lady, Her Majesty the Queen Mumtaz al-Zamani, was held.

And the gold railing, on which the inscription, knobs and most of the flowers are inlaid in enamel, and which required 40,000 *tolas* of gold, equivalent in cost to an amount of six lakhs of rupees, was brought by Bebadal Khan, the superintendent of the goldsmith establishment (*darogha-i-zargarkhana*) of the royal household, along with enameled golden constellation-orbs (*kaukaba*) and hanging lamps, all of which had been completed under his supervision, and submitted for [His Majesty's] most enlightened inspection. And at the most exalted royal order, the railing was set up and the aforesaid hanging lamps and constellation-orbs were suspended above that descending place of divine pardon [i.e., the Queen's grave].

And on all four sides of the platform of the plinth (*chabutara-i-kursi*) of the building of the holy tomb, the foundation (*buniyan*) of whose dome (*gumbad*) had not yet come up above the ground (*zamin*), sky-wide tents and around them vast canopies (*shamiyana-ha*) were raised. And that entire expanse was adorned with decorated carpets, and an assembly-place arranged that could accommodate one thousand persons.

And His Majesty, along with those princes resembling the retinue of Jam, and the nobles and grandees of the government, added splendor to that assembly of heaven-

like qualities, attended by the learned men and pious persons. And after the necessary requisites of Qur'an-recitation and prayers, so many victuals, meats and fragrant beverages were consumed, that the eye of greed and avarice was satiated merely by looking at it. And 25,000 rupees were distributed separately to the deserving men and deserving women. And having been presented, according to their ranks, with open vests, shawls and cash, the pious, the righteous and the Qur'an memorizers (*huffaz*), who had gathered from various parts of the kingdom, were permitted to take their leave.

## 7.3. LAHORI

**[I, p. 487]** On Thursday, the 17th of Z'il-Qa'da, 1042 [26 May 1633], a royal order was issued to undertake the arrangements for the 'Urs of Her late Majesty the Queen.

As an order had previously been given to Bebadal Khan, who held the post of the superintendent of the goldsmith establishment (*darogha-i-zargarkhana*) of the royal household, to have prepared under his supervision a golden screen (*mahjari*), whose inscriptions, bosses and most of its flowers were to be of enamel-work (*minakari*), along with enameled gold constellation-orbs (*kaukaba*) and hanging lamps (*qanadil*). And as these had been completed, he now produced them for inspection before the illumined sight. And it was ordered that the screen, which had required 40,000 *tolas* of gold, and was worth six lakhs of rupees, should be set up round the grave (*turbat*) of that one enshrined in divine mercy, and the constellation-orbs and hanging lamps suspended above the resting-place (*marqad*) of that recipient of divine light.

And orders were also issued to erect, on the platform of the plinth (*chabutara-i-kursi*) of the building (*'imarat*) of that tomb (*mazar*) having the vestiges of Paradise, the foundation of whose dome (*asas-i-gumbad*) had not yet come above the ground, sky-high tents (*khaima-ha*) and sphere-wide canopies (*sayaban*) on all four sides; and to decorate its entire grace-filled expanse with embellished carpets (*satha'i-muzayyan*) and multicolored floor-spreads (*farsh-ha'i-mulawwan*).

When the skilled workers (*karpardazan-i-chabuk-dast*) had finished the arrangement and embellishment of that place of heavenly vestiges (*makan-i-firdaus-nishan*), that night, the Emperor of the Age, in company with the Lady of holy titles and of heavenly-sphered canopy, Begam Sahib [Jahanara] and the other royal princes and princesses, and all the veiled ladies of the curtains of chastity and pious ladies of the secluded places of magnificence, proceeded to the illumined grave (*darih*) of that one whose resort is heaven and remained there for two watches (*pahar*), invoking blessings on the soul of that traveler to the realm of holiness. And according to the royal order, varieties of food, different kinds of sweetmeats and various sorts of scented beverages were spread out, and a general invitation to partake was extended.

And 25,000 rupees **[p. 488]**, half of the annual fixed amount, was bestowed upon the deserving men. And having conferred, by way of kindness, according to their ranks, open-vested robes and shawls upon the religious leaders [lit., men wearing large turbans] who had gathered from different corners of the kingdom, he afterwards returned with all splendor to the lofty Royal Palace (*daulat khana*). And at the close of the day, the reality-knowing Emperor again went and illuminated that divinely

favored place with the light of his presence, till one watch (*pahar*) of the night; and on this occasion 25,000 rupees were bestowed upon the deserving ladies.

## 7.4. SALIH

[Salih's account of the Second 'Urs (Vol. 1, pp.551-53) is identical to that of Tabataba'i given above in section 7.1.]

# 8

# MENTION OF THIRD 'URS, PRIOR TO ROYAL EXCURSION TO KASHMIR

[The two earlier histories by Tabataba'i and Qazwini, as well as Salih's plagiarized version of the former, allude to Shah Jahan's despondency over the approach of the third death anniversary as one of the reasons he postponed his scheduled departure for Kashmir. In his officially sanctioned history, Lahori passes over the incident in silence, perhaps because he realized it could be construed in a negative way--seeing as how the other reason cited for not departing was the fact that the passes to Kashmir were not yet clear of snow.]

## 8.1. TABATABA'I

**[fol. 83a]** Among the events of these days was the cancellation, for the time being, of the journey to the promenade of Paradise-resembling Kashmir, and the postponement of that honored departure until the approach of some other chosen hour.

Apart from the dictates of the Divine Decree and the will of the Turner of men's hearts--which lie behind what are generally referred to as the cancellation of one's intentions and the annulment of one's designs, the other obvious reason for the delay was that, after **[fol. 83b]** the second journey to the promised Paradise, namely the heart-pleasing Kashmir, had already been fixed and agreed upon, from the contents of the news reports of the offical recorders (*waqi'a-nawis*) in those parts, it was disclosed that the roads and passes would not be clear from snow until the beginning of the month of Khurdad. Consequently, because of this news, the original plan was discarded.

Moreover, at about this time, there had also approached the month of Zi'l-Qa'da 1043, on Wednesday the 17th of which [15 May 1634], that pardoned Lady had returned to divine forgiveness and strolled into the highest Paradise. And lending weight to the delay was the fact that, during the entire period of the said month, that Sun of the universe of sovereignty always dresses in white like the true dawn; and having abstained from indulging in various kinds of pleasant pursuits such as wearing fine raiment, recreational pastimes, using perfumes and scents, listening to vocal and instrumental music, he never allowed himself to indulge in rest and relaxation--as opposed to other months, when this abstention is limited to Wednesdays. Under these circumstances, it was not seemly to His Majesty's gracious mind that he should pass these days of mourning in the enjoyment of the charming sights of the lakes of Bihishtabad, or promenading among blossoming trees, delighting in the *jughasi* tulips, glancing at roses and hyacinths, and gazing at gardens and meadows.

Consequently, the skilled astrologers and almanac experts, according to both the Indian and Iranian systems, were ordered to determine another auspicious hour for departure; and the 1st of the month of Khurdad 1043 [22 May 1634], which was

predicted to be an august date of great felicity and auspiciousness, was fixed for the setting out of the victorious cavalcade in that direction.

### 8.2. QAZWINI

**[fol. 309b]** And there had also arrived the month of Zi'l-Qa'da 1043, on Wednesday the 17th of which [15 May 1634], the unpleasant event of the [death of the] divinely pardoned Lady, Her Majesty the Queen Mumtaz al-Zamani, had occurred, [in deference to which] His Majesty on those very Wednesdays of other months, and during that entire month, dons only white and does not listen to instrumental or vocal music. And in spite of the fact that the excursion to the fragrant garden of Kashmir is best undertaken in the month of Farwardin, he did not desire, in those days necessitating grief, to indulge in the excursion through the said land which is the envy of the garden of the black-eyed Houris [of Paradise]. And having deferred that hour of departure, he ordered the astronomers to select another auspicious time. Consequently, the astronomers indicated Monday, the 1st of the month of Khurdad 1043 [22 May 1634] as a happy hour.

### 8.3. LAHORI

[Lahori omits reference to the Third 'Urs.]

### 8.4. SALIH

[Salih's mention of the Third 'Urs (Vol. 2, pp. 10-11) is identical to that of Tabataba'i given above in section 8.1.]

# 9

# FOURTH 'URS

## 9.1. TABATABA'I

**[fol. 135a]** On the 15th of the month of Urdibihisht, corresponding to the 17th of Zi'l-Qa'da 1044 [4 May 1635], which was the anniversary of the passing away of that pardoned lady, Her Majesty the Queen, in accordance with the established annual practice, an august assembly was held at the holy mausoleum of that Lady of pious qualities; and those in attendance included the learned scholars and righteous saintly persons, men of piety and abstinence, memorizers of the Qur'an (*huffaz*) and books on Tradition (*hadith*), and the turbaned clergy (*arbab-i-'ama'im*), who are all termed men of good fortune.

And His Majesty also, in his fortunate and happy person, blessed that august assembly with his presence, and devoted himself to praying and reciting the Fatiha for the rest of that soul and further repose and tranquillity of that Houri-natured Lady having her abode in the gardens of Paradise. And through charity and good works, he acquired the very instrument [lit., title-deed] of seeking forgiveness and insuring the divine pardon of that forgiven one. According to the established practice of previous years, a total of 25,000 rupees were bestowed on the deserving men; **[fol. 135b]** and an equivalent sum was distributed in the women's assembly among widows, indigent women, and chaste ladies in distressed circumstances.

## 9.2. QAZWINI

**[fol. 342a]** On the 15th of Urdibihisht, corresponding to the 17th of Zi'l-Qa'da 1044 [4 May 1635], which is the anniversary of the death of that Lady returned to divine pleasure, Her Majesty the Queen Mumtaz al-Zamani, an assembly was arranged according to the usual practice, in the illuminated mausoleum of that one resting in eternal Paradise, to which were invited the pious, the righteous, the memorizers of the Qur'an (*huffaz*) and the reciters of formulas glorifying God. And His Majesty, having graced the assembly with his presence, gladdened the soul of that repository of divine pardon by reciting the fragrant Fatiha. And 25,000 rupees each were distributed among the deserving men and deserving women.

## 9.3. LAHORI

**[Ib, p. 88]** On the 17th of Z'il-Qa'da 1044 [4 May 1635], which was the anniversary of the death of Her Majesty the Queen, in the manner of every year, in the mausoleum (*rauza*) of that one enshrined in eternal mercy, an 'Urs assembly was held. The God-knowing monarch, having bestowed the honor of his presence on that Paradise-like place, granted half of the fixed annual sum of 50,000 rupees to the

pious, the righteous, the *huffaz* and the other deserving men in that assembly, which was the dwelling-place of divine bounty; and the next day, the remainder was granted to the deserving ladies.

## 9.4. SALIH

[Salih's account of the Fourth 'Urs (Vo. 2, p. 98) is identical to that of Tabataba'i given above in Section 9.1.]

# 10

# MENTION OF DEATH OF MUMTAZ MAHAL AS REASON FOR BYPASSING BURHANPUR

[Although this incident clearly reflects favorably on Shah Jahan, it is curiously missing from Lahori's official history, and apparently also from the surviving manuscripts of Tabataba'i and Qazwini.]

## 10.1. SALIH

**[p. 152]** On the 9th of Bahman [19 Sha'ban 1045/28 January 1636], the pleasure-house of Kanara [was reached] . . . . On the fourth day [23 Sha'ban/1 February], the march from that delightful place occurred. And leaving on the right the fortified city of Burhanpur, on account of the fact that the inevitable event [i.e., the death] of Her late Majesty the Queen had taken place there, and also that he was disinclined, His Majesty bypassed it and turned his august attention towards Balaghat.

# 11

# ROYAL VISIT TO THE TOMB BEFORE THE SIXTH 'URS

## 11.1. LAHORI

**[Ib, p. 242]** On the 25th of Ramazan 1046 [11 February 1637], His Majesty went to the tomb (*mazar*) having the vestiges of Paradise, of Her late Majesty the Queen; and at the time of return, the house of that prince of auspicious dignity, Muhammad Shah Shuja' *Bahadur*, whose precious constitution had deviated from the path of moderation, was blessed with happiness by the arrival replete with divine grace [of Shah Jahan]. Upon the royal arrival, that prince of high lineage fulfilled the rites of *pa-andaz* [spreading a carpet to walk on] and *nisar* [showering coins over the head], and also presented the requisite offering (*peshkash*); whereupon he was encompassed with royal favors.

## 11.2 SALIH

[Salih omits mention of the royal visit before the Sixth 'Urs.]

# 12

# SIXTH 'URS

## 12.1. QAZWINI

**[fol. 409]** On the night of Tuesday, the 25th of Farwardin, corresponding to the 17th of the month of Zi'l-Qa'da, 1046 [13 April 1637]--which was the anniversary of the death of that Lady returned to divine mercy, Her late Majesty Mumtaz al-Zamani--according to the practice of every year, an 'Urs assembly was held in the Illumined Tomb of that one resting in eternal Paradise. And the Sayyids, learned men, memorizers of the Qur'an (*huffaz*), and reciters of religious formulas glorifying God all gathered there and engaged themselves in repeating the *dhikr* formulas and Qur'an recitation. **[p. 410]** Having embellished that holy congregation with the light of his presence, His Majesty the second Sahib Qiran, along with the successful princes of illustrious lineage and grandees of the long-enduring government, distributed 25,000 rupees each to the deserving men and women, according to the established practice.

## 12.2. LAHORI

**[Ib, p. 253]** On the night of the 17th of Zi'l-Qa'da 1046 [13 April 1637], which was the anniversary of the passing of Her late Majesty the Queen, under the orders of the God-knowing Emperor, a group of learned men, memorizers of the Qur'an (*huffaz*), judges (*qazis*), and other dignitaries and men of piety gathered at the tomb (*mazar*), endowed with marks of divine grace, of that descending place of divine light, and busied themselves in reciting glorification (*tasbih*) and praise of God. And the truth-cherishing Emperor went to that Paradise-like place, along with the princes of high rank and royal offspring of great stature; and having bestowed the sum of 25,000 rupees to the said group of men, he returned to the august Royal Palace (*daulat khana*) after one *pahar*. And on the next morning, the holy resting-place (*marqad*) of that one enveloped in the mercies of the glorified Lord was once again illumined with the light of the arrival of the Emperor, the asylum of Faith. The veiled Ladies of the palace of good fortune, who had at this time obtained the honor of attendance upon him, also derived merit from visiting the tomb (*ziyarat*); and the sum of 25,000 rupees was at this time also distributed among the deserving women.

## 12.3. SALIH

[Salih omits mention of the Sixth 'Urs.]

# 13

# ROYAL AWARD TO AMANAT KHAN FOR EXECUTING CALLIGRAPHY INSIDE TOMB

[Virtually identical, except for slightly varying plays on the different meanings of the Persian words *khatt* and *naskh*, these passages confirm the inscriptional evidence on the tomb, that Amanat Khan's role as calligrapher was one of great importance, which brought him significant royal recognition. Other historical and inscriptional references to Amant Khan are assembled below in Part IV.]

## 13.1. LAHORI

**[II, p. 8]** On the 1st of Sha'ban 1047 [19 December 1637], Amanat Khan, whose Naskh calligraphy (*naskh-khatt-i-u*) has drawn the line [cipher] of cancellation (*khatt-i-naskh*) across the pages of the Naskh-writers of the day, had his desires fulfilled with the grant of an elephant, as a reward for the inscription which he had written inside the sky-high dome (*gumbad*) of the sky-high tomb (*mazar*) of Her late Majesty Mumtaz al-Zamani.

## 13.2. SALIH

**[II, p. 266]** On the 1st of Sha'ban 1047 [19 December 1637], Amanat Khan--whose novel style of calligraphy (*khatt-nu-a'in*) has drawn the line of cancellation (*raqm-i-naskh*) across the fresh down (*khatt-i-sabz*) [on the cheeks] of the calligraphers of the realm of beauty--was exalted with the present of an elephant, in reward for the inscription which he had written inside the sky-high dome (*gumbad*) of the tomb (*mazar*), displaying marks of divine bounty, of Her late Majesty the Queen.

# 14

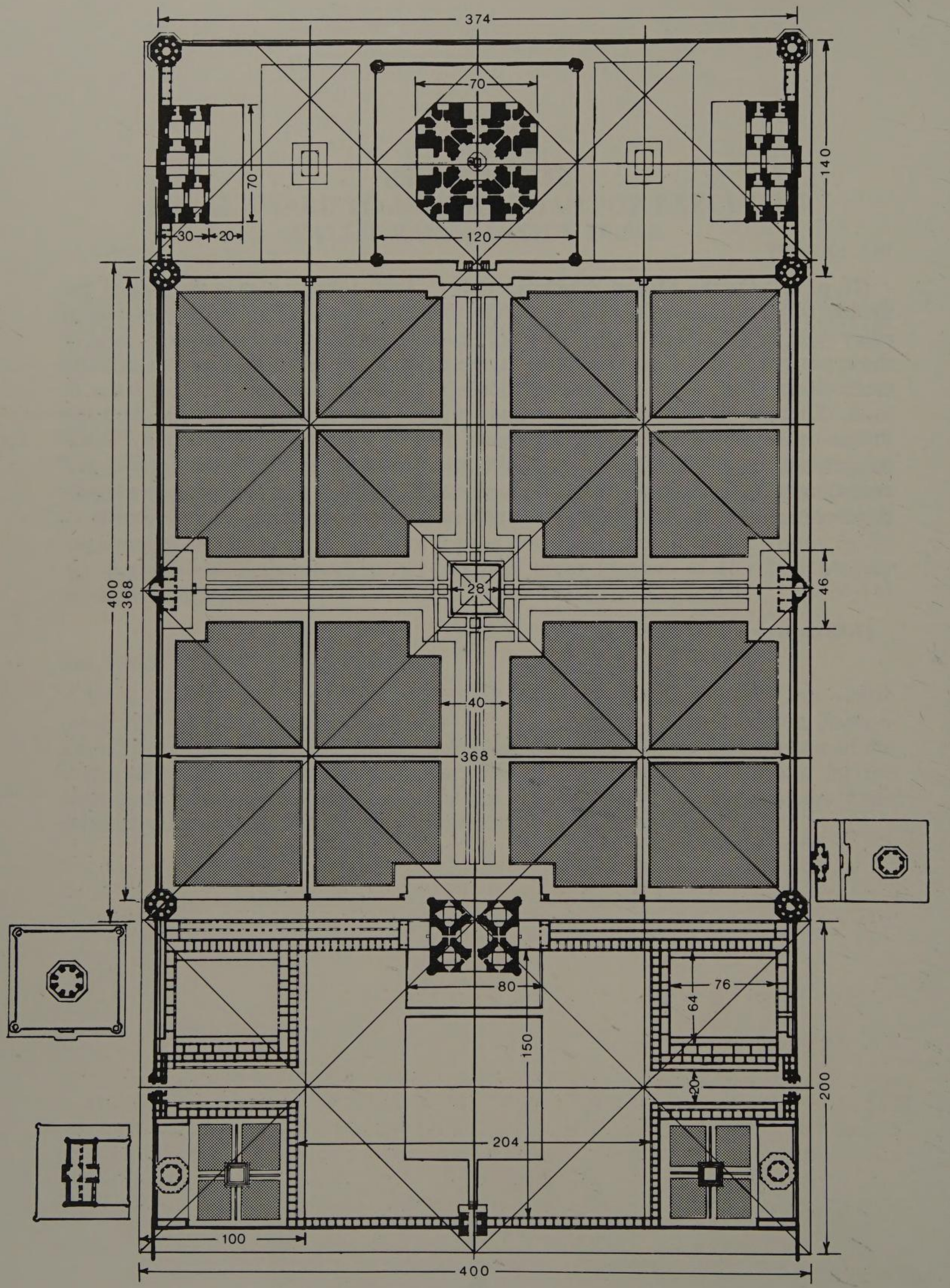
# SEVENTH 'URS

## 14.1. LAHORI

**[II, p. 92]** On the 17th of Zi'l-Qa'da 1047 [1 April 1638], which is the date of the demise of Her Majesty the Queen, an 'Urs assembly was held, as was the custom of every year, in the sacred tomb (*rauza*) of that traveler to the realm of piety. And of those present in that bountiful function, the Sayyids, the learned, the pious and the memorizers of the Qur'an (*huffaz*) partook [lit., had their share] of the varieties of food, different kinds of sweetmeats and various types of scents. **[p. 93]** And the throne-decker of sovereignty, having graced the divine resting-place (*marqad*) of that one enshrined in divine mercy, engaged himself in reciting the fragrant Fatiha; and according to established practice, in this assembly 25,000 rupees were bestowed upon the deserving men, and an additional 25,000 on the next day to the deserving ladies.

## 14.2 SALIH

[Salih omits mention of the Seventh 'Urs.]




13. Reconstructed grid plan of Taj Mahal complex, based on Mughal measurements.

# 15

# TWELFTH 'URS, AND DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE RECENTLY COMPLETED TOMB COMPLEX

[From the profusion of precise measurements given in the following detailed descriptions of the recently completed tomb complex--which Shah Jahan formally inspected at the time of the Twelfth 'Urs in February 1643--it is clear that Lahori had access to the architect's detailed plans. Lahori's description, which Salih mostly copies verbatim, is highly systematic in its progression from one part of the complex to another, suggesting that he may have had such a plan in front of him as he was writing.

[Although no seventeenth-century Mughal plans survive, the accuracy of Lahori's measurements can be demonstrated by the reconstructed plans and elevations published in this book, prepared from detailed study of both the text and the site. Scholars have known for some time that Mughal architects used grids to design their buildings, but the drawings published here establish for the first time exactly how the buildings fit within such a grid. It is apparent that the grid was an indispensable tool in the task of relating the proportions of individual buildings to each other and to the overall plan itself. For by extending the grid of the well-preserved parts of the complex, it now becomes possible to reconstruct the layout of the largely destroyed sarais and bazars lying to the south--which, according to Lahori, generated the revenues assigned in Shah Jahan's endowment for maintenance of the tomb in perpetuity.

[Also published here for the first time are translations of the descriptive verses composed by Shah Jahan's court poets Kalim and Qudsi; particularly interesting are several verses by Kalim, which evoke the intricacy and beauty of the tomb's extensive inlay work.]

## 15.1 LAHORI

**[p. 322]** On the night of the 17th of Zi'l-Qa'da 1052 [6 February 1643], the assembly of the death anniversary (*'urs*) of Her late Majesty the Queen, Mumtaz al-Zamani, was held at the Illumined Tomb (*rauza-i-munavvara*) of that one enveloped in divine forgiveness and favor--which had been completed about this time, and whose detailed description will presently be given. And those men of piety who were in attendance, comprising learned scholars, saintly persons, those who had committed the Qur'an to memory (*huffaz*), and the needy and deserving, devoted themselves to reciting the Qur'an and the Fatiha. And having graced that bountiful place with his presence, the Monarch of ocean-like liberality distributed at this function half of the fixed sum of 50,000 rupees; and the next morning, he returned again, and distributed the remaining half among the assembled women.

### ACCOUNT OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SACRED TOMB

*Foundations and Plinth*

At the beginning of the fifth year of the exalted accession [January 1632], the excavation was started for the laying of the foundation (*bunyan*) of this sublime edifice, **[p. 323]** which is situated overlooking the Jumna river flowing adjacent to the north. And when the spade-wielders with robust arms and hands strong as steel, had with unceasing effort excavated down to the water table, the ingenious masons (*bannayan*) and architects (*mi'maran*) of astonishing achievements most firmly built

the foundation (*asas*) with stone and mortar up to the level of the ground (*sath-i-zamin*).

And on top of this foundation, there was raised a kind of platform (*chabutara-asa*) of brick and mortar in one solid block (*yak lakht*), measuring 374 cubits (*zira'*) long by 140 wide and 16 high, to serve as the plinth (*kursi*) of this exalted mausoleum--which evokes as a vision of the heavenly gardens of Rizwan and epitomizes, as it were, the holy abodes of Paradise.

And from all parts of the empire, there were assembled great numbers of skilled stonecutters (*sangtarash*), lapidaries (*munabbatkar*), and inlayers (*parchingar*), each one an expert in his art, who commenced work along with other craftsmen. The exposed sides (*ru-i-kar*) of this plinth were faced with dressed slabs of red stones (*sang-i-surkh-i-tarashidah*), so smoothly cut and joined by expert craftsmanship that even close inspection fails to reveal any cracks between them; and the floor of the plinth was also paved with the same red stone.

In the middle of this platform plinth--which ranks [in magnificence] with the heavenly Throne of God (*'Arsh-martabat*)--there was constructed another solid (*yak lakht*) and level platform (*kursi*), 120 cubits square and 7 high, faced entirely with white marble (*sang-i-marmar*). In the center of the second platform, the building (*'imarat*) of this heaven-lofty and Paradise-like mausoleum was constructed on the plan of a Baghdadi octagon (*tarah-i-musamman-i-baghdadi*), 70 cubits in diameter, on a base plinth (*kursi*) one cubit in height.

*Interior Hall, Dome, and Other Features*

Situated in the exact center of the building, the domed hall (*gunbad*) over the sepulcher (*marqad*) of that recipient of divine grace has been finished with white marble within and without. From the floor (*sath*) to the curvature (*zih*), the hall under the dome is octagonal in shape, with a diameter of 22 cubits. The curvature is ornamented with *muqarnas* motifs, while from the cornice to the inner summit of the dome, **[p. 324]** which is at a height of 32 yards from the floor of the building, there are arranged marble slabs cut in a geometric molded pattern (*qalib-kari*).

And above this inner dome, which is radiant like the hearts of angels, has been raised another heaven-touching, a guava-shaped (*amrudi-shakl*), dome--to discover the minute mathematical degrees (*darajat-i-daqaiq*) of which would confound even the celestial geometrician (*muhandis-i-falak*) [i.e., Saturn]. Crowning this dome of heavenly rank, the circumference of whose outer girth (*mintaq*) is 110 yards [or 35 yards in diameter], there has been affixed a golden finial (*kalas*) 11 yards high, glittering like the sun, with its summit rising to a total height of 107 yards above the [level of the] ground.

Under the dome, on its eight sides, there are eight seat-alcoves (*nashiman*), on both stories, each one 5.5 cubits long and 3 wide. In the four cardinal directions, there are four square chambers (*khana*) on two stories, each one being 6 cubits in length and width, with four seat-alcoves 4.5 cubits in length and 3 in width. In front of each of these chambers is an arched portal (*pishtaq*), measuring 16 cubits wide, 9 deep, and 25 high. At the four corners are four octagonal chambers, in three stories; and each chamber is 10 cubits in diameter, provided with eight seat-alcoves. The third story of these chambers has an octagonal portico (*aiwan*) with a domed roof (*gumbad-i-saqf*).

On the three outside faces of these octagonal chambers there are three arched portals (*pishtaq*), each measuring 7 cubits wide, 6 deep and 10 high.

*Grave and Cenotaph, Marble Screen, and Hanging Lamps*

In the center of the tomb lies the divinely graced grave (*mazja'*) of that leader of holy women and paragon of the pious--who occupies the reclining couch of the highest heaven and the chief seat in the loftiest mansions [of Paradise], and is enshrined in divine mercy and pardon and enveloped in divine absolution and pleasure.

[On the floor directly] above the actual grave (*turbat*) of that resident of paradise, there stands a marble platform (*chabutara*) on which a cenotaph (*surat-i-qabr*) has been raised. And surrounding this is an octagonal latticed screen (*mahjar-i-mushabbak*) **[p. 325]** which is highly polished and pure, made of that very stone--the wonderful inlay workmanship of which will be presently described--with an entrance fashioned of jasper after the Turkish fashion (*tarh-band-i-rumi*), joined with gilded fasteners, the cost of which was 10,000 rupees.

In the interior of this *'Arsh*-like structure, gold-enameled (*tala'i minakar*) constellation-orbs (*kaukaba*) and hanging lamps (*qanadil*) shine forth. And all the four arches (*taq*) of this heaven-like dome have been cased with [panes of] Aleppo glass, leaving in one of them a doorway for coming and going.

*Minarets*

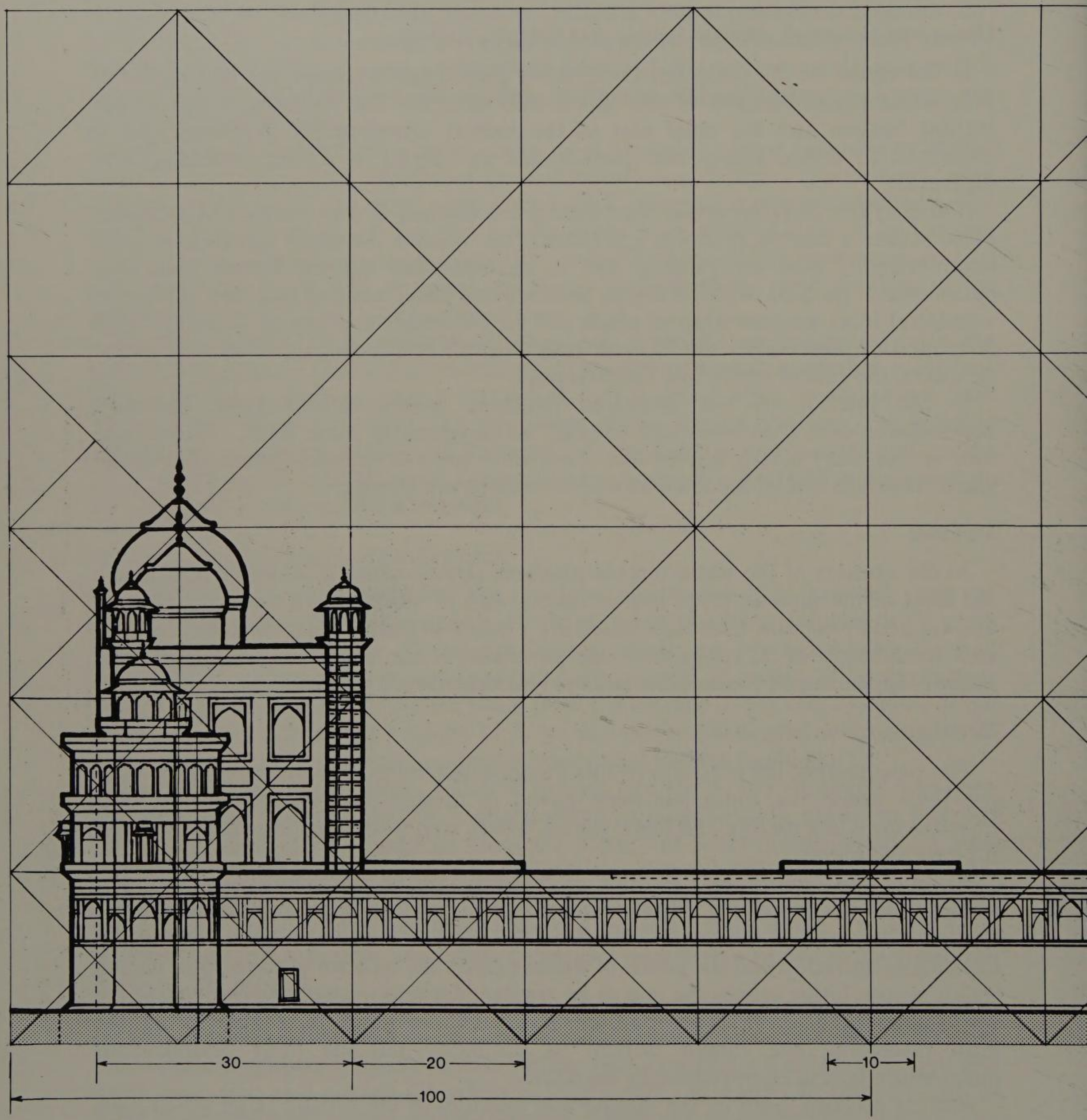
At the corners of the white marble platform (*kursi*), which is 23 yards high above the level of the ground, stand four minarets, also of marble, with interior staircases and capped by cupolas (*chartaq*), which are 7 cubits in diameter [at the base] and rise to a total height of 52 cubits from the pavement of the said platform to the finial (*kalas*)--appearing, as it were, like ladders reaching toward the Heavens.

*Description of the Inlay Work*

The pavement of the platform of this Paradise-like tomb is of white marble; while the floor inside the tomb has been paved in utmost beauty and delicacy, with interlocking white marble and black stones, which, as it were, outshine [lit., lend color to] days and nights.

All over the interior and exterior of the structure of this mausoleum, wonder-working and magic-making artisans have inlaid carnelian and other kinds of colored and precious stones--the jewels of whose description cannot be contained in the capacity of narration and the pearls of whose praises the balance of the tongue cannot weigh, whose luster causes the sun to be resplendent and whose splendor causes the world-illuminating dawn to be bright-faced [in embarassment]--in such a way that the most discerning eye cannot fathom its subtleties and the most perspicacious imagination fails to comprehend its wonders.

And an account, both of the quality and quantity of the artistic skills which have been employed in the inlay work of the grace-platform and the railing around it--the reflection of whose wonderful designs causes the eye of the sun to be embellished and the skirt of this sphere to blossom like spring--and **[p. 326]** the miracle which the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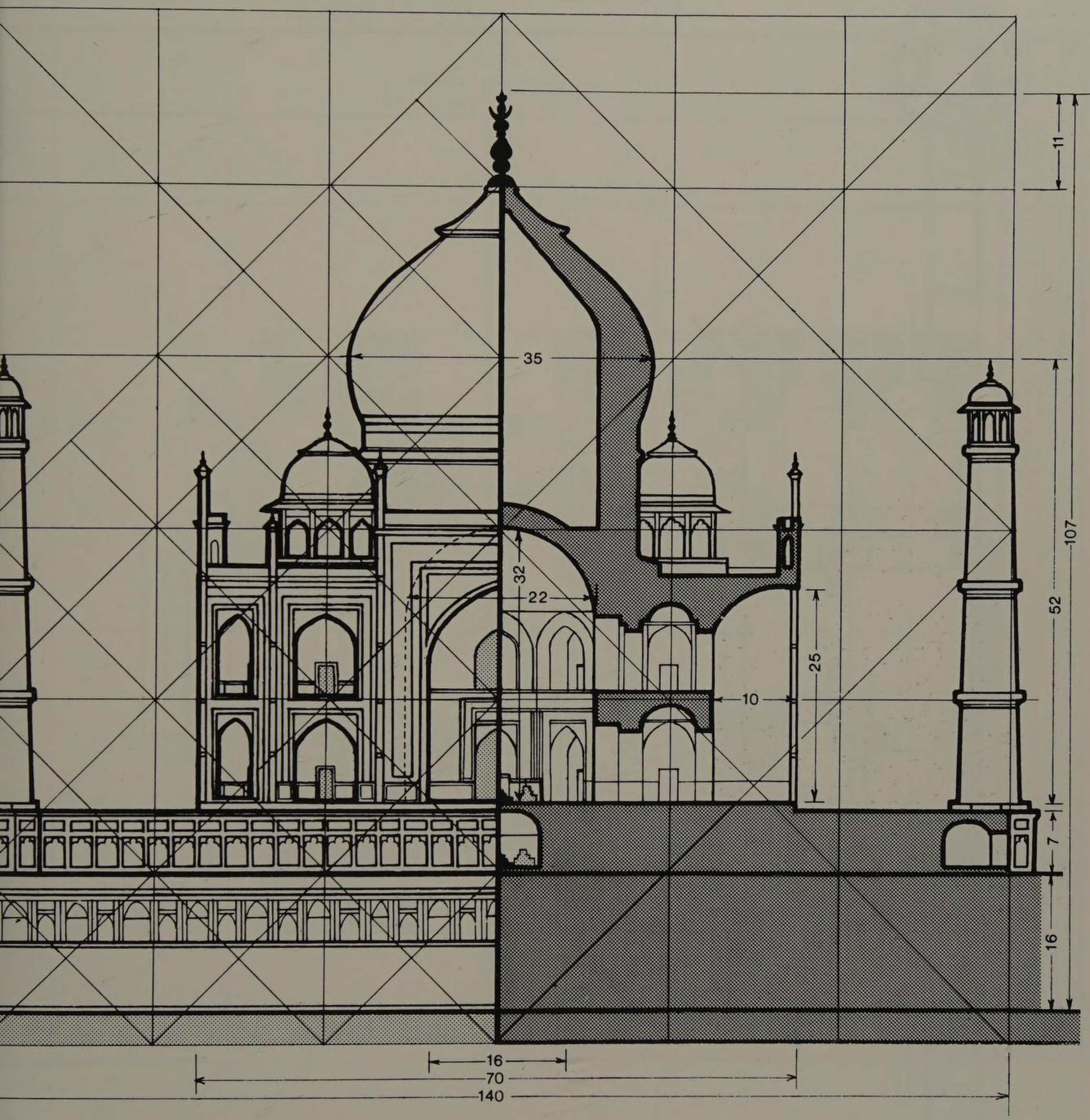
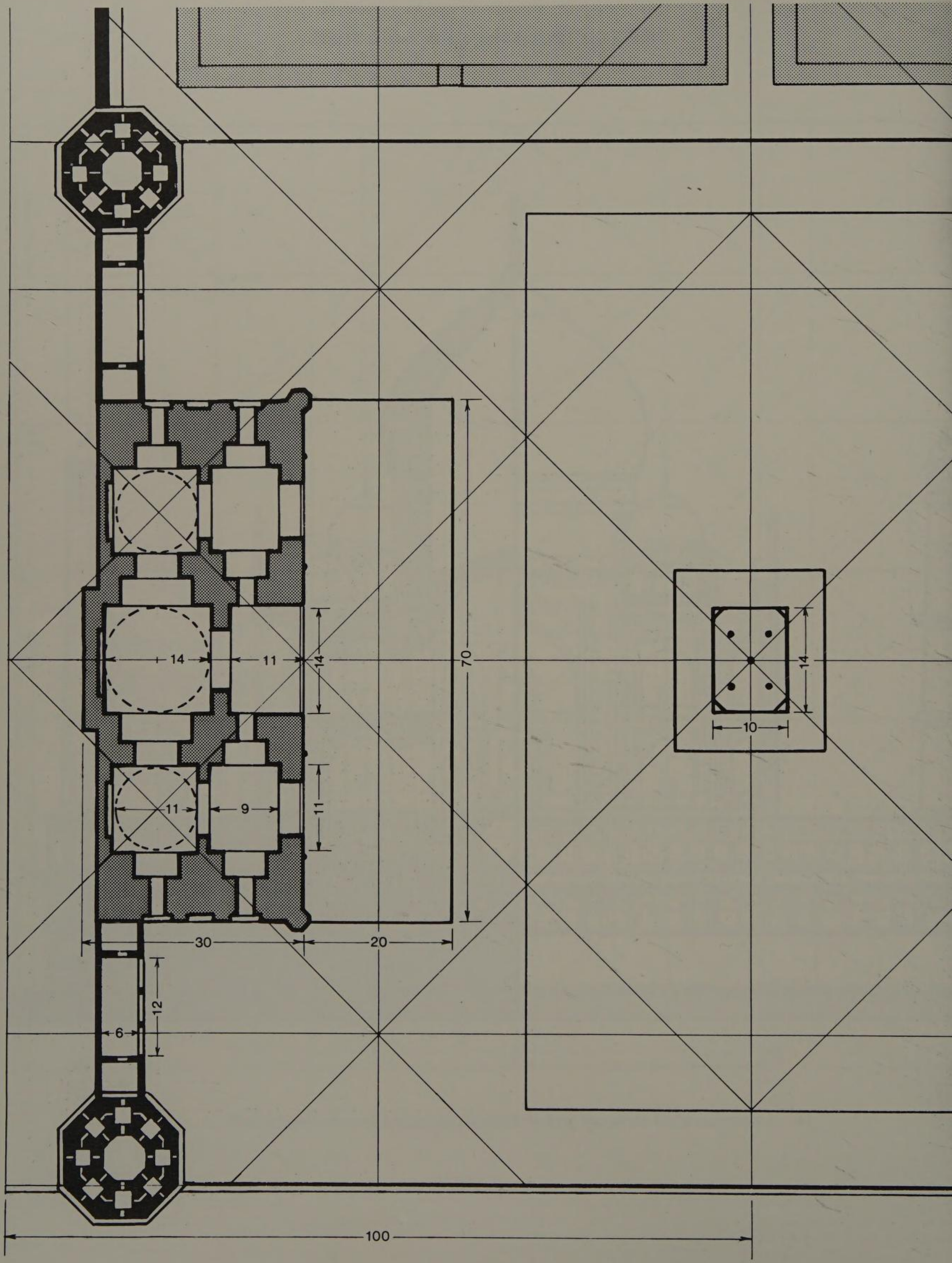



14. Reconstructed elevation grid of north facade of tomb and assembly hall.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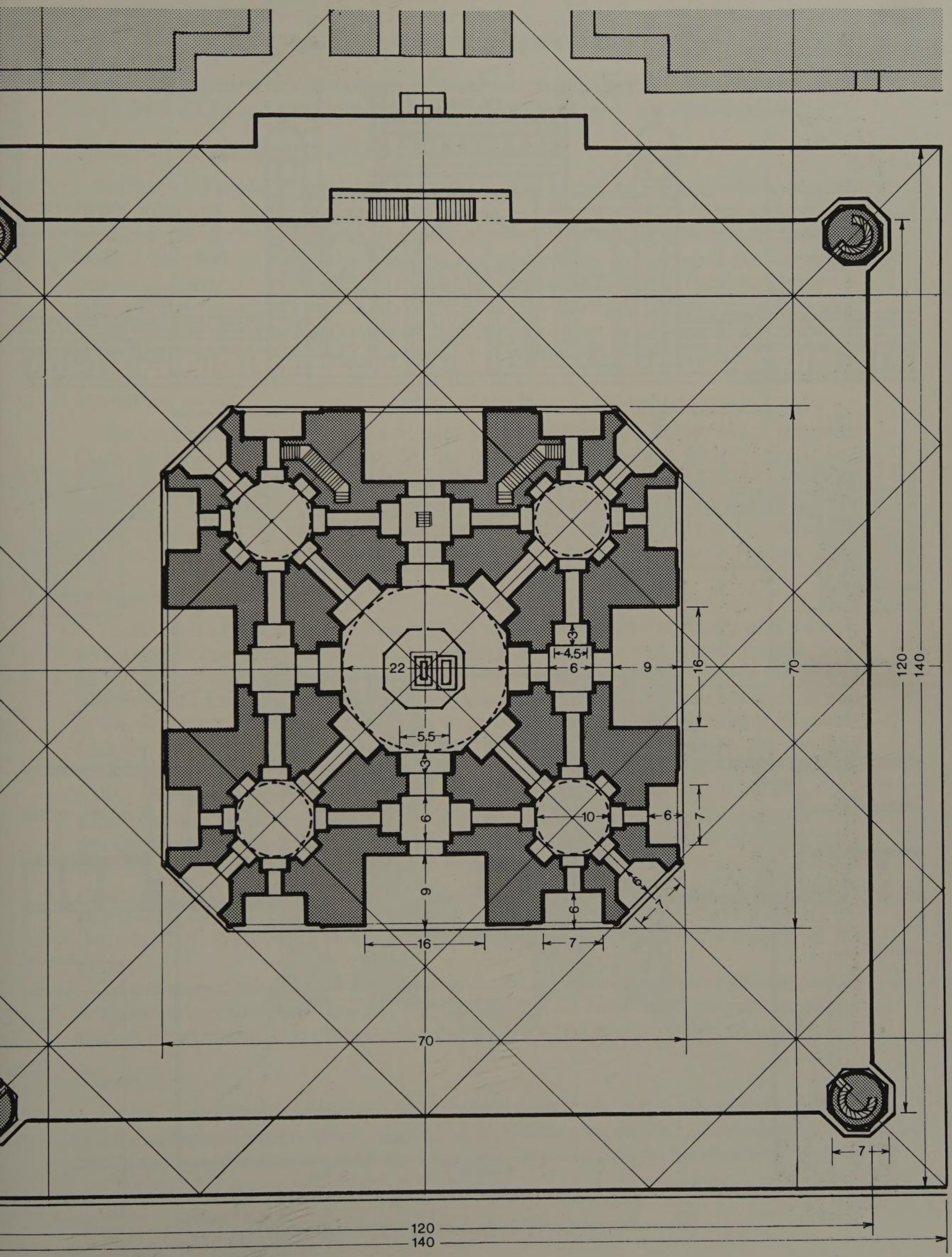
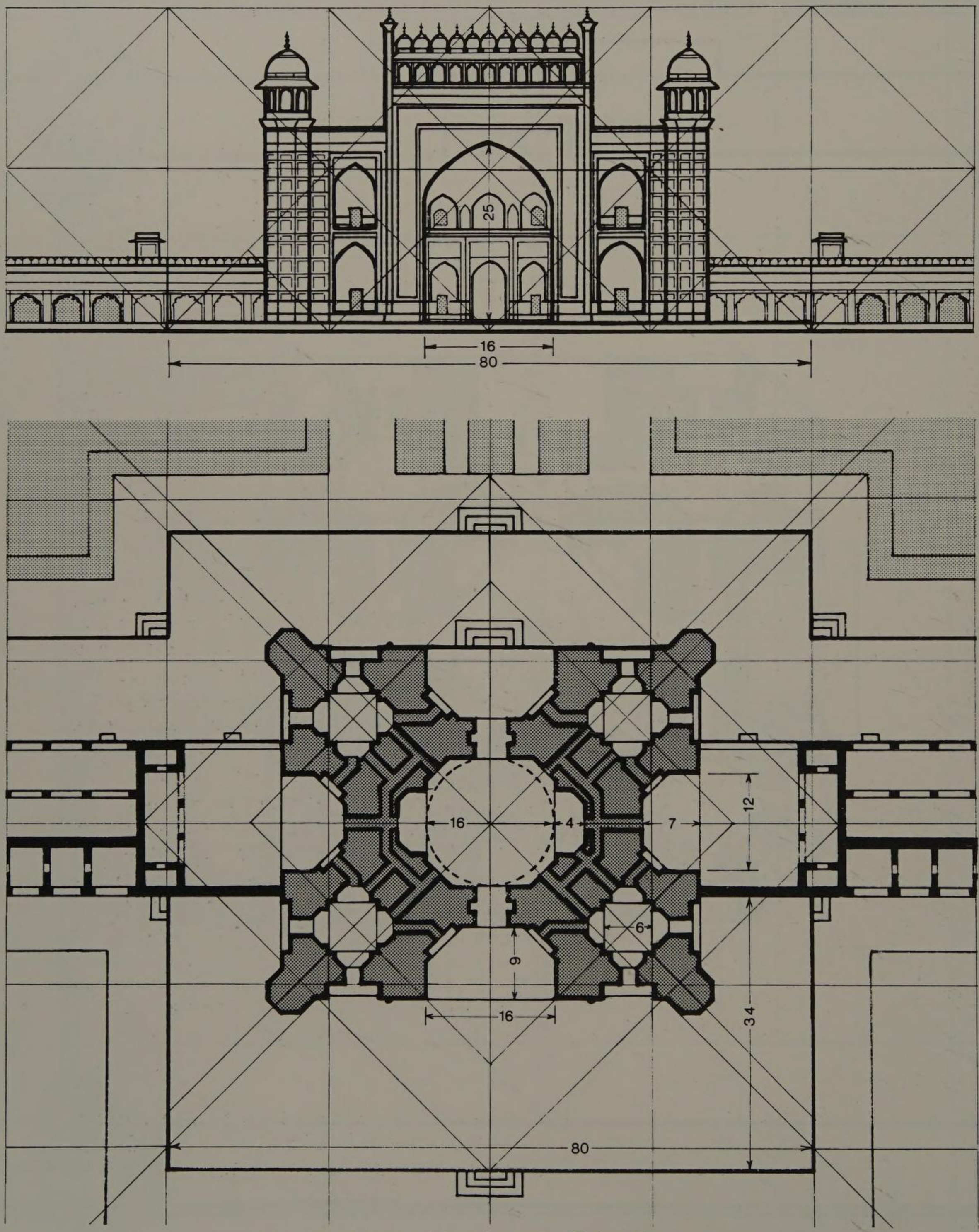



15. Reconstructed grid plan of tomb and assembly hall.




16. Reconstructed elevation and grid plan of gateway.

magic-working carvers and artisans of Mani-like achievements have wrought, could never be finished and completed, even with the pens of trees and inks of oceans.

*Mention of the Earlier Gold Railing*

Earlier, at this place, there had been the railing of enameled gold, which weighed 40,000 tolas and which cost six lakhs of rupees, as has been written in the sequence of events of the sixth regnal year of the first cycle. But, the far-sighted and forward-looking Emperor, through his foresight and precaution, had ordered the overseers (*mutasaddiyan*) of the affairs of the buildings of the Illuminated Tomb to prepare a railing of white marble of the kind described above. As it was completed in the space of ten years at a cost of 50,000 rupees, it has now been set up in place of the railing of pure gold.

*Inscriptions*

The inscriptions on the inside and outside of the Illumined Tomb, which comprise Qur'anic suras and verses of mercy, the beautiful [ninety-nine] divine names, and traditional prayers, have been [so skilfully] executed in inlay-work as to baffle the residents of the surface of the earth--nay, the inmates of the holy places in the land of the heavens. And the narration of the account of the engraved work of this edifice of firm foundations and solid base and its terrace would require a separate volume.

*Mosque and Assembly Hall*

To the west of the Illumined Tomb, there stands, on a platform (*kursi*) of red stone, a mosque of the same stone, 70 cubits in length and 30 in width, with three arched openings and containing three domes, all three of which are of red stone inside and white marble from outside. The central dome is 14 cubits in diameter, and each one of the other two is 11 in diameter. In front of the central dome is an arched portal (*pishtaq*), 14 cubits long by 10 deep and 21 high. In front of each of the two side domes, there is a chamber 11 yards long and 9 wide. The dado-border of the mosque, inside and outside, has been inlaid with white marble and yellow and black stone in a wave-pattern. **[p. 327]** The floor of the mosque has been paved with red stone, and through the inlay-work of yellow and black stone therein, the figures of prayer-mats (*jay-namaz*) have been shown. And in front of the mosque, there is a raised terrace (*chabutara*), 70 cubits long and 20 wide, provided with a tank (*hauz*), measuring 14 cubits long and 10 wide. Its soul-refreshing court serves as the prayer place of the [four saintly] Autad, and its heart-exhilarating expanse, the prostration-place of the devoted.

To the east of the Illumined Tomb stands the guest-house (*mihman-khana*), which is an exact replica of the mosque, resembling it in all details and particulars, except that its [rear] wall has no prayer-niche (*mihrab*) nor its floor the prayer-mat pattern.

*Towers*

At the four corners of the red stone plinth (*kursi*), there are situated four three-storied octagonal towers (*burj*), their third story being capped by a domed roof. The inside surface of the dome is of red stone, and the outside of white marble. And by

the side of each tower is a portico (*aiwan*), 12 yards long and 6 deep, which has two rooms on two sides.

*Garden and Other Features*

Below the red stone terrace, is the Paradise-like garden, 368 yards square, abounding in aromatic herbs and different kinds of trees. Within the four walkways laid out in the middle of the garden, which are 40 cubits in width, there runs a water-channel, 6 yards wide, in which fountains jet up spouts of water [channeled] from the Jumna. At the confluence of the canals is a platform (*chabutara*), 28 yards square, around which runs the water-channel. In the middle of the platform is a reservoir, 16 yards square, filled with five fountains. And the floor of the walkways of this replica of Paradise (*namudar-i-jannat*) is paved with red stone, set edge-to-edge with utmost artistic skill.

On each of the east and west sides of the garden is a portico (*aiwan*), 11 yards wide and 7 deep, with two side rooms. And at the back there is a chamber **[p. 328]** 9 cubits wide and 5 deep, and in front a platform (*chabutara*), 46 by 10 cubits. The southern wall of the garden is furnished with multiple porticos (*aiwan dar aiwan*) facing north, measuring 12 yards in width. At the two corners of this wall, stand two towers (*burj*), resembling the towers of the red stone plinth.

*Gateway and Forecourt*

In the center of this [southern] wall, the gateway of the tomb has raised its head to the sky. The diameter of the central domed hall of the gateway, which is [laid out] according to the Baghdadi-octagonal plan, is 16 cubits; and on the eastern and western sides of this domed hall, there are two semi-octagonal seat-alcoves (*nashiman*), each one measuring 7 by 6 yards, with half-domed ceilings. At the four corners of the building of the gateway are four two-storied square chambers, each measuring 6 cubits and provided with four semi-octagonal seat-alcoves.

On the northern and southern faces of this building there are two arched portals (*pishtaq*), each measuring 16 yards wide, 9 deep and 25 high; while on the eastern and western sides there are two arched portals, each 12 yards wide, 7 deep and 19 high. At the top of the exterior and interior facades of the gateway are seven [*sic*] pavilions (*chaukhandi*), capped by white marble domes. At the four corners of this edifice, are attached four minarets of lavish workmanship and great beauty.

And the garden walls and buildings all around it on the inner and outer sides, the flooring of the edifices, and the galleries (*shurfat*) of the garden walls--which have touched the circle of the heavens--have all been built of red stone, inlaid with white marble and black stone.

In front of the gateway, there is a raised terrace (*chabutara*), 80 cubits in length and 34 in breadth, and a large forecourt (*jilaukhana*) measuring 204 cubits in length and 150 in width; and around the four sides of the forecourt there are 128 rooms.

Adjoining the wall of the garden, there are two servants' compounds (*khawasspura*), **[p. 329]** one on the eastern side of the forecourt and the other on the western side, each measuring 76 cubits in length and 66 in width, and containing 32 rooms, each with a portico (*aiwan*) in front, which were built for the attendants of that one

enshrined in divine mercy. To the east and west of the forecourt, rooms of shops have been laid out, the verandas of which are of red stone and the rooms of brick and mortar; and the width between these markets is 20 yards.

*Sarais and Bazar*

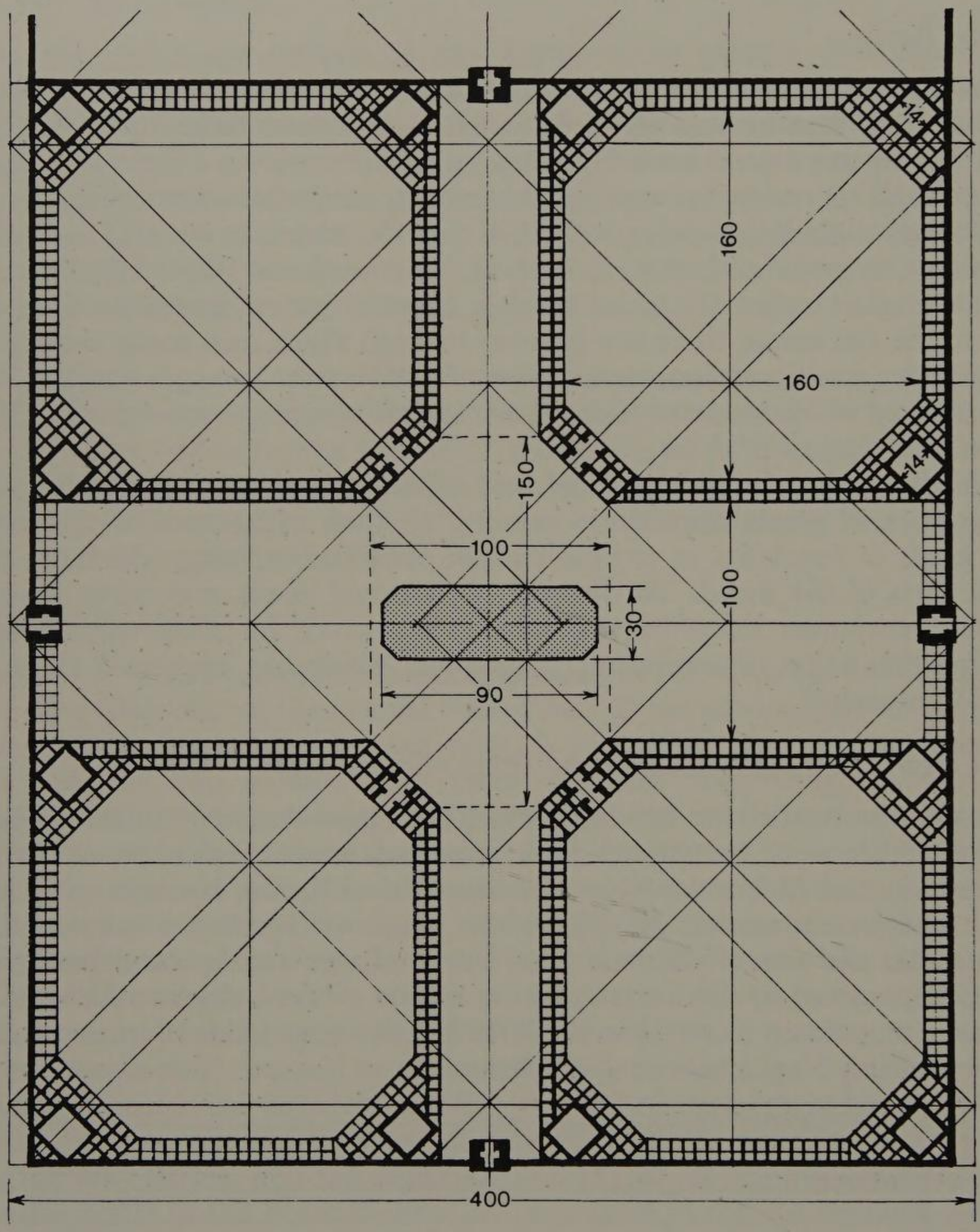
Beyond the southern wall of the forecourt, there is a market-square (*charsu-bazar*), measuring from east to west 90 yards in width, and from north to south 30 yards. Around this square are situated four sarais, of which two have been constructed of burnt brick and mortar by the royal establishment, each of which is 160 cubits square, with a Baghdadi-octagonal courtyard containing 136 rooms, in front of each of which is a portico. At the three corners of each of these two sarais, there are three squares (*chowk*), the court (*sahn*) of each of which is 14 by 14 cubits; and at the front corners of each of the two sarais, there is a gateway through which men come and go. [These gateways] open into an octagonal plaza (*chauk*), 150 cubits in length and 100 in width, in the center of which has been laid out the market-square (*charsu-bazar*). The other two sarais are replicas of these.

And in these sarais are bought and sold different kinds of merchandise of every land, varieties of goods from every country, all sorts of luxuries of the time, and various kinds of requisites of civilization and comfortable living, which are brought from all parts of the world. At the rear of the royal sarais, merchants have raised numerous permanent mansions and constructed sarais [of their own]. And this flourishing habitation of everlasting foundation, which has become a large city, is named Mumtazabad.

*Cost of Construction and Account of the Tomb's Endowment*

The expenditure on all the buildings, which have been described in detail above, [**p. 330**] and which were completed in a space of about twelve years, under the superintendence of Makramat Khan and Mir 'Abd al-Karim, amounts to 50 lakhs of rupees. And an endowment (*waqf*) for the Illumined Tomb has been established, which includes the annual revenues from thirty villages among the dependencies of the district (*pargana*) of the territory of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad and Nagarchain, amounting to 40 lakhs [4,000,000] of *dams*, as follows [unnamed thirtieth village is probably Nagarchain, at 100,000 *dams*]:

1. Dhanouli Buzurg.....320,000
2. Auhali.....300,000
3. Ramanai.....300,000
4. Kuktha.....250,000
5. Dhamsari.....240,000
6. Dakhrota.....200,000
7. Samu.....200,000
8. Bodhana.....170,000
9. Pithouli.....160,000
10. Theri.....150,000
11. Ataura.....150,000
12. Malhapur.....140,000
13. Larawanda.....120,000
14. Juwaini.....120,000




17. Reconstructed grid plan of market and sarais south of Taj Mahal complex.

15. Charwa Khurd .....100,000
16. Uncha.....100,000
17. Karmana.....100,000
18. Daintura.....100,000
19. Atos .....100,000
20. Ousra.....80,000
21. Sudhorin .....80,000
22. Behpari .....60,000
23. Basahi.....60,000
24. Madina.....60,000
25. Dhandhupur.....60,000
26. Shaikhpur .....50,000
27. Sathandi.....40,000
28. Raipur .....40,000
29. Nurpura.....30,000

And along with this annual revenue--which is equivalent to one lakh of rupees, although it may in favorable years and months be more than this, on account of the increase in the yield--the income of the shops of the above-mentioned markets and flourishing sarais has also been endowed, which amounts to two lakhs of rupees annually. And should there be any need of repairs, a sum from the income of these endowed objects may be spent on maintaining these places; while the remainder may be spent **[p. 330]** to meet the usual expenditures of the annual stipends and monthly salaries, and also the expenses of food and drink, which have been set apart for the keepers, attendants, inmates and servants of this place of lofty dignity, as well as for other needy and indigent persons. And regarding whatever surplus may remain, the reigning monarch [lit., caliph of the time], in whom rests the trusteeship of this sacred abode of bounty, will act as he deems fit and proper.

## 15.2. SALIH

**[II, p. 380]** On the 17th of Z'il-Qa'da 1052 [6 February 1643], the auspicious function of the death anniversary (*'urs*) of Her late Majesty, Mumtaz al-Zamani was held in the illumined mausoleum of that one of holy qualities, which had been completed at this time, attended by the learned and the pious. And the august person of His Majesty also blessed that assembly with the light of his presence; and through recitation of prayers and the Fatiha, there was achieved the means for the repose of the soul of that one veiled in chastity and residing in the gardens of Paradise.

### CONSTRUCTION OF THE MAUSOLEUM OF MUMTAZ AL-ZAMANI

*Foundations and Plinth Platforms*

The details of the recently completed buildings of the sacred mausoleum, which now became the object of his enlightened inspection, are to this effect:

In the fifth year of the exalted accession, the foundation of this edifice of heavenly foundations, compared to which, the solidity and height of the foundation of the seven heavens of Shaddad do not form even one-thousandth part, was laid

overlooking the Jumna river, which flows to its north. And the bottom of its foundation (*buniyad*) having been excavated down to the water, wonder-working masons raised its foundation in utmost strength, [filling it] with stone and mortar, and brought it up to the ground level.

And upon this foundation, the plinth (*kursi*) of that tomb--whose equal among buildings, with respect to its plinth and height, profusion of decoration and ornamentation, and spaciousness and expanse, does not exist on the surface of the earth--was constructed of bricks and mortar all in one piece (*yak-lakht*), 374 yards long and 140 wide, and raised to [a height of] 14 yards. The front of this plinth was decorated with finely cut red stone, in which much craft of carving and inlay work had been employed; and its floor was also made of red stones joined edge-to-edge (*girahbandi*) with each other.

And in the middle of this plinth (*kursi*), another platform was raised, which is faced with white marble, all in a single block (*yak-lakht*), even and square, 120 yards on a side and 7 cubits (*zara'*) high. And in the center of this second platform, the edifice **[p. 381]** of the sky-touching heaven-like mausoleum, having a diameter of 70 cubits and a plinth of one yard, was constructed on the Baghdadi-octagonal plan.

*Interior Hall, Dome, and Other Features*

The dome (*gunbad*) over the illumined grave, which is in the exact center of this building, was finished wholly of white marble, both inside and outside. It is octagonal from the floor level (*sath*) to the curvature (*zih*), with a diameter of 22 cubits; and the curvature [of the dome] has been decorated with *muqarnas* motifs. From the curvature to the apex (*shuqqa*) of the dome, which is 32 yards high from the floor (*sath*) of the building, white marble, carved in interlocking geometric patterns (*qalib-kari*), has been used. And above this has been raised a guava-shaped (*amrudi-shakl*) dome, to estimate even the slightest degree of whose foundation (*az qiyas-i-qadar-i-asas*), would confound even the engineer (*muhandis*) of Wisdom.

At the top of the said dome, the circumference of whose girth (*mintaqa*) is 110 yards [or 35 yards in diameter], a finial (*kalas*) 11 yards in height has been fixed which is made of pure gold and glitters like the sun. In brief, the distance from the ground level to the apex of the finial is 107 yards.

On its eight sides, there are, in two stories, eight seat-alcoves (*nashiman*), each 5.5 yards long and 3 wide. At the four cardinal points, there are in two stories, four square chambers (*khana*), 6 cubits on a side, provided with four seat-alcoves (*nashiman*), each of which is 4.5 cubits long and 3 wide. In front of each of these square chambers is an arched portal (*pishtaq*), 16 cubits in width by 9 deep and 25 high. And at the four corners there are four octagonal chambers in three stories, each chamber being 10 cubits in diameter, and provided with eight seat-alcoves (*nashiman*). The third story of these chambers has octagonal porticoes (*aiwan*) with domed roofs. On the three sides of the octagonal chambers which face toward the outside, there are three arched portals (*pishtaq*), each 7 cubits in width by 4 deep and 10 high.

*Grave and Cenotaph, Marble Screen and Hanging Lamps*

In the middle of the tomb (*gumbad*) lies the resting place (*marqad*) of that occupier of the chief seat in the courtyard of the highest heaven. Above the actual grave (*turbat*), there is a platform of white marble surmounted by a cenotaph (*surat-i-qabr*). And surrounding this is an octagonal latticed screen (*mahjar-i-mushabbak*), completely decorated with inlay work (*parchin-kari*), with an entrance fashioned of jasper, according to the Turkish fashion (*tarh-bandi-i-Rumi*), joined with gilded fasteners, which cost 10,000 rupees. In the interior of this sublime edifice, **[p. 382]** are suspended constellation-orbs (*kaukaba*) and hanging lamps. All the four arches (*taq*) have been cased with [panes of] Aleppo glass, leaving in one of them a doorway for coming and going.

*Minarets*

And at the four corners of the white marble terrace, which is 20 yards [*sic*; should be 23 yards] in height from the ground, four minarets with interior staircases have been erected of white marble, measuring 7 yards in diameter [at the base] and 52 in height--appearing, as it were, like accepted prayers from the heart of a holy person, which have ascended to the sky; or with respect to their height and stability of foundation, they seem headed towards the zenith like the high fortune and judgment of the Wise.

*Description of Inlay Work*

All over the interior and exterior of the mausoleum, especially on the platform containing the illuminated cenotaph, carvers of rare workmanship, with delicate craftsmanship, have inlaid a variety of colored stones and precious gems--the jewels of whose description cannot be contained in the ocean of speech, nor may even the most ordinary degree of whose narration be achieved through the faculty of speech and discourse. And compared to its beautiful execution, which possesses infinite degrees of beauty, the masterpieces of Azrang and the picture galleries of China and Europe (*Firang*) have no substance or reality, and appear like mere reflections on water.

*Inscriptions*

And the inscriptions on both the interior and exterior [of the tomb]--comprising chapters from the Qur'an and verses referring to Divine Mercy--have been inlaid in utmost lavishness and artistry, with the subtlety of the genius of Farhad's art, and the point of the stone-cutting chisel displaying such delicate freshness and color as to surpass the artistic skill of the sky and draw the line of invalidation and sign of cancellation (*raqm-i-naskh*) across the calligraphical writing (*khatt*) of the Yaqut of the ruby-lipped ones.

*Mosque and Assembly Hall*

To the west of the tomb lies a mosque of red stone, 70 yards in length and 30 in width, provided with three arched openings and surmounted by three domes, all of which are of red stone within and white marble without. And the white marble dado

border of the said mosque, both inside and outside, has been inlaid with yellow and black stones in a wave pattern. And around the plain slabs of the floor of the mosque, which is paved with red stone, yellow and black stone borders have been arranged in the arched *mihrab* shapes of prayer mats (*jay-namaz*). And in front of the mosque, there is a raised terrace (*chabutara*), 70 cubits in length and 20 in width, [and in the court] a tank (*hauz*) 14 cubits in length and 10 in width. Its soul-refreshing courtyard (*sahn*) is replete with the light of happiness, like the forehead of the fortunate ones; **[p. 383]** and its heart-exhilarating expanse has opened up the gates of bounty on the face of hearts, like the dawn of good fortune.

To the east of the tomb, a guest-house (*mihman khana*) has been constructed, which is identical to the mosque in all details and particulars, except that the *mihrab* niche and prayer mats are not displayed on its wall and floor.

*Towers*

At the four corners of the plinth (*kursi*) of red stone, there are situated four three-storied octagonal towers (*burj*), which have domed roofs fashioned of red stone within and of white marble without. Beside each tower is a portico (*aiwan*), 12 yards in length and 6 in breadth, flanked by two chambers on both sides.

*Garden and Other Features*

Below the large red-stone platform (*kursi*), lies a Paradise-like garden (*bagh firdaus-a'in*) and a flower-garden (*gulshan*) decorated like Iram, measuring 368 yards square, and abounding in various kinds of fruit-bearing trees and rare aromatic herbs. Verily, its environs are like the black mole on the forehead of all the world's pleasure spots and each of its bounty-laced flower-beds is pleasing and heart-captivating like the flower-beds of the garden of the keeper of Paradise (*rizwan*). Its attractive green trees are perennially fed with the water of life; and the stature of each tree, in respect to both quantity and quality, by every reckoning surpasses that of the celestial Lotus tree. Within the four walkways laid out in the middle of the garden, which are each 40 cubits in width, there flows a water-channel, 6 cubits in width, provided with light-sprinkling fountains that gush forth, sprinkling pearls of water [channeled from] the Jumna.

In the center of this garden, there is a platform (*chabutara*), 28 yards square, around which the aforementioned channel runs; and in the midst of it is a tank (*hauz*), 16 yards square, filled with the water of the celestial Kauthar and provided with fountains all around it spouting jets of water--illuminating, as it were, the world-illuminating Day. In short, the excellent features of this Paradise-like garden--such as its pathways fashioned entirely of red stone, its galaxy-indicating water-channel, and its tank of novel design which has materialized from the crystal of purity from the world of illumination--have reached a stage surpassing imagination, and the smallest particle of its description cannot be accommodated by the faculty of speech.

Along **[p. 384]** both the eastern and western sides of the garden, there is a portico (*aiwan*), 11 yards in length and 7 in width, furnished with two rooms (*hujra*). At the rear of the portico there is a chamber 9 cubits long by 5 wide; and in front, a platform (*chabutara*), 46 yards in length and 10 in width. The southern side of the

garden is entirely filled with multiple porticoes (*aiwan dar aiwan*) facing north. And at the eastern and western corners, two lofty towers (*burj*) have been constructed furnished with heart-pleasing seat-alcoves (*nashiman*).

*Gateway and Forecourt*

And the gateway of this exalted edifice, which is lofty and well-planned, has been adorned with all the beauties of the gateway of Paradise and decorated from top to bottom with varieties of pictures and paintings in utmost loftiness and colorfulness. Atop both the interior and exterior [facades], there are seven [*sic*; now eleven] pavilions (*chaukhandis*), each one of which is capped by a dome of white marble. At each of the four corners, there are attached minarets, finished in great lavishness and elegance; the four walls have been built of red stone. In front of the said gateway, there is a raised terrace (*chabutara*), 80 yards long and 34 wide; and a forecourt (*jilaukhana*), 204 cubits long and 150 wide, on the four sides of which there are 128 rooms.

Adjoining the garden-wall, there are two servants' quarters (*khawasspura*), to the east and west of the forecourt, each measuring 76 yards long and 64 wide, comprising 32 rooms, with a portico (*aiwan*) constructed in front of every room.

*Sarais and Bazar*

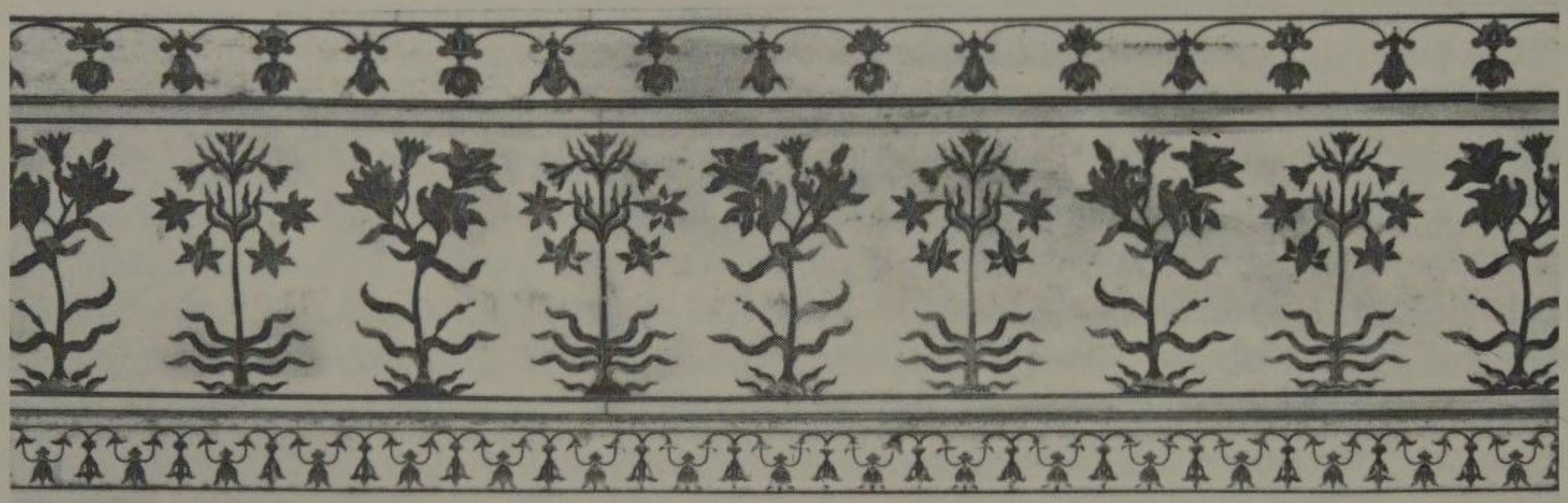
To the south of the forecourt, there is a market-square (*charsu-bazar*), fronted by red stone porticoes (*aiwan*), with rooms built of brick and mortar; its western and eastern sides are 90 yards long, and its northern and southern sides 30 yards. Surrounding this market-square, there are four pleasing sarais, each one 160 yards square, consisting of 136 rooms with porticoes. Passing farther on, there is a plaza (*chawk*), 150 yards in length and 100 in width, in the middle of which is the market-square. The two other serais are identical [to the first two].

And in these sarais different kinds of merchandise of every land and varieties of the goods of every country are brought and sold. Besides this, merchants have constructed many mansions and numerous sarais, **[p. 385]** to such an extent that it has become a large city, named Mumtazabad.

*Cost of Construction, and Details of the Tomb's Endowment*

The expenditure incurred in all these buildings, which were completed in the space of twelve years, under the superintendence of Makramat Khan and Mir 'Abd al-Karim, amounted to 50 lakhs of rupees. Thirty villages from the dependencies of Akbarabad, whose revenue is 40 lakhs of *dams*, equivalent to one lakh of rupees, along with the two lakhs of rupees of rent income from the shops and sarais, have been endowed for the Illumined Tomb. And it has been ordered that, if by chance a need for repairs arises, the required sum for the repairs of these sacred buildings should be taken from the above amount; and the remaining should be utilized for meeting the usual expenses of the annual and monthly stipends, and food-and-drink expenses that have been fixed for the attendants and inmates of this place of high dignity, and other needy and destitute persons. And whatever surplus remains, falls

to the discretion of the Caliph of the Time *(khalifa-i-waqt)*, with whom rests the trusteeship of this sacred abode.



18. Detail of floral inlay on cenotaph of Mumtaz Mahal.

### 15.3. KALIM, *PADSHAH NAMA*

[For Persian text of Kalim's verses, see Supplementum 3.4.]

*Description of the Tomb*

(1) Upon her grave--may it be illumined till the Resurrection!--
The King of Kings constructed such an edifice,

(2) That since the Divine Decree drew creation's plan,
No one has seen its equal in magnificence.

(3) An edifice, whose quality imparts such stability
And firmness to the mansion of description,

(4) That, even if they became submerged in water,
Its couplets (*bait*) [also means house] would escape ruin.

(5) Since heaven's vault has been standing, an edifice like this
Has never risen to compete against the sky.

(6) Its color resembles dawn's bright face,
For both inside and out, it is entirely marble.

(7) Nay not marble, for in respect of delicacy and beauty (*ab wa rang*),
The eye can mistake it for a cloud.

(8) Such an edifice befits such a grave,
Which in stature touches the very cloud of divine mercy.

(9) On its stones, a hundred kinds of ornaments and designs,
Have become apparent through the chisel's blade.

(10) Indeed, the chisel has become the fabled brush of Mani,
Painting a myriad pictures upon the water of the marble.

(11) The magical "pictures-on-water" have become wonderfully durable,
Through the good fortune of the fortunate King.

(12) The embellishment of its stones has put out the candle
Of the art and skill of the artists of China.

(13) The inlayer has set stone within stone,
As bold and precise as the dark spot within the tulip's heart.

(14) Pictures become manifest from every stone;
Take a look at the garden in the mirror--

(15) They have inlaid stone flowers in marble,
Which surpass reality in color if not in fragrance.

(16) Those red and yellow flowers that dispel the heart's grief,
In reality are carnelian and amber.

(17) Nay not flowers, they are rather the fresh cheeks of Houris,
Or dewdrops engraved upon crystal.

(18) Every stone is brought to shining life,
Whether figures or patterns of waves and bubbles.

(19) When of such stone a tombstone (*lauh-i-mazar*) is made,
The heart of the deceased will behold its reflected beauty.

(20) The flower to which the chisel imparted form,
Has received the dew of the marble's luster.

(21) Since the very first moment of creation,
Who till now has seen an edifice like this?

(22) In its praise, Speech need not resort to elaboration--
The very device that is the poet's stock-in-trade.

(23) Elaboration has been exhausted on it on so vast a scale,
That for Speech there now remains no share.

(24) Loftiness has elevated it to the Divine Pedestal (*Kursi*),
Beneath the foot of which loftiness itself is forced to sit.

(25) The lip of its terrace is mole-studded with stars;
Twilight is the painted decoration of its plinth.

(26) And to that plinth, the heavens swear
That Time has never ushered in its equal.

(27) For ascending its terrace, the only sufficient ladder
Would be Time itself in embodied form.

(28) Its boundaries [lit., sides] are Eternity without beginning or end,

While its stairs are Time's total aggregate of years.

(29) Firmness has adorned it so pervasively,
That its shadow causes the firm earth to careen into the ditch.

(30) My speech does not run smoothly in singing its praises;
Firmness is a hindrance in treading the path of description.

(31) The height of Mount Bisutun beside this edifice,
Is like a low cloud next to the lofty Sky.

(32) With the height and depth of its roof and foundation,
It touches both the zenith and the nadir of the Sky.

(33) The back of the earth-supporting bull sways to its belly,
Reduced to a foot-print from carrying such a burden.

(34) When compared to the stature of its plinth,
The clouds for height come up empty-handed, like a bubble.

(35) If the clouds be not ashamed of their lowliness of status,
Then why do they exude such profuse moisture?

(36) Were its shadow to cast its burden upon the mountain,
The mountain's back would break from that glorious load.

(37) Its marble slabs have been so expertly joined,
That every crack is concealed, even from the eye of imagination.

(38) Like milk with sugar, they are so well blended,
Not even a hair's crack is to be found.

(39) Since its lustrous stone is entirely free from blemish,
The edifice appears as unified as one perfect bubble.

(40) Light sparkles from within its pure stones,
Like wine within a crystal goblet.

(41) When reflections from the stars fall on its marble,
The entire edifice resembles a festival of lamps.

(42) The eye of the sun overflows with tears from looking at it;
Its shadow is like moonlight to the earth.

(43) By describing this dawn of sunlight,
The blackness [i.e., misfortune] of Speech has ended.

(44) If the sculptures of Bisutun came to be fashioned,
The reason was envy of this ornament of Time,

(45) Speech has scratched its face out of grief;
Its tales of Farhad and Shirin pale by comparison.

(46) This beautiful tomb is a relic left by the King,
Designed to endure even beyond the end of the world.

(47) So long as the words flower and garden remain,
So long as there are residues of clouds and rain,

(48) May this grave be perpetually showered by divine mercy,
And may the flower of His forgiveness grow from its dust!

## 15.3 QUDSI

[For Persian text of Qudsi's verses, see Supplementum 3.5.]

*Description of the Tomb*

(1) How excellent is the holy tomb of the Bilqis of the Age,
Which became the couch of that Lady of the Universe.

(2) An illumined place like the garden of Paradise;
As fragrant as Paradise mixed with ambergris.

(3) The Houris, adorned with scented beauty marks [?],
Continually sweep its courtyard with the brooms of their eyelashes.

(4) Its walls are studded with precious gems,
Lending the air exhilarating freshness from their watery luster.

(5) The builder of this sacred threshold,
Has brought its water [luster] from the fountainhead of divine beauty.

(6) On this holy edifice of lofty station,
The cloud of divine mercy continually showers moisture.

(7) Here provident mercy repeatedly descends,
Here prayers are always granted acceptance.

(8) The dwellers at this threshold,
Are proverbial in the world for their hospitality.

(9) If you cherish a desire in your head, then come;
For the morning breeze has never returned empty-handed.

(10) Here the rose of forgiveness blooms in abundance,
Refreshing even the angelic celestials by its fragrance.

(11) Lest the cloud neglect to shower the water of mercy,
The rose only smiles from under a veil.

(12) If a transgressor seeks refuge at this door,
He becomes cleansed from sin like one pardoned.

(13) Because its bud yearns to blossom in a smile,
No morning breeze rises, for fear of dislodging a single straw.

(14) From modesty, its atmosphere is covered with a veil,
Its breeze is like a bud sitting in seclusion.

(15) Here no one blames anyone for faults,
Divine pardon is the deed of endowment for this tomb.

(16) Here not a single prayer proceeds from the heart,
Without forgiveness coming to knock at its door.

(17) If a sinner turns his face toward this tomb,
His book of deeds is washed clean of sins.

(18) At the sight of this tomb, the eye of both sun and moon,
Through compassion, pour forth tears.

(19) In this court, the curtains of which are the Sky itself,
Even the sun is one of those allotted a daily stipend.

(20) The Sky expects its livelihood from this door,
For both moon and sun supplicate here evening and morning.

(21) The Lord who provides livelihood even to Life,
At this door apportions livelihood to the entire world.

(22) Perpetuity is incapable of raising its head from its shadow;
For the Divine Decree has painted its image.

(23) Time has constructed this edifice,
To display thereby the Creator's glory.

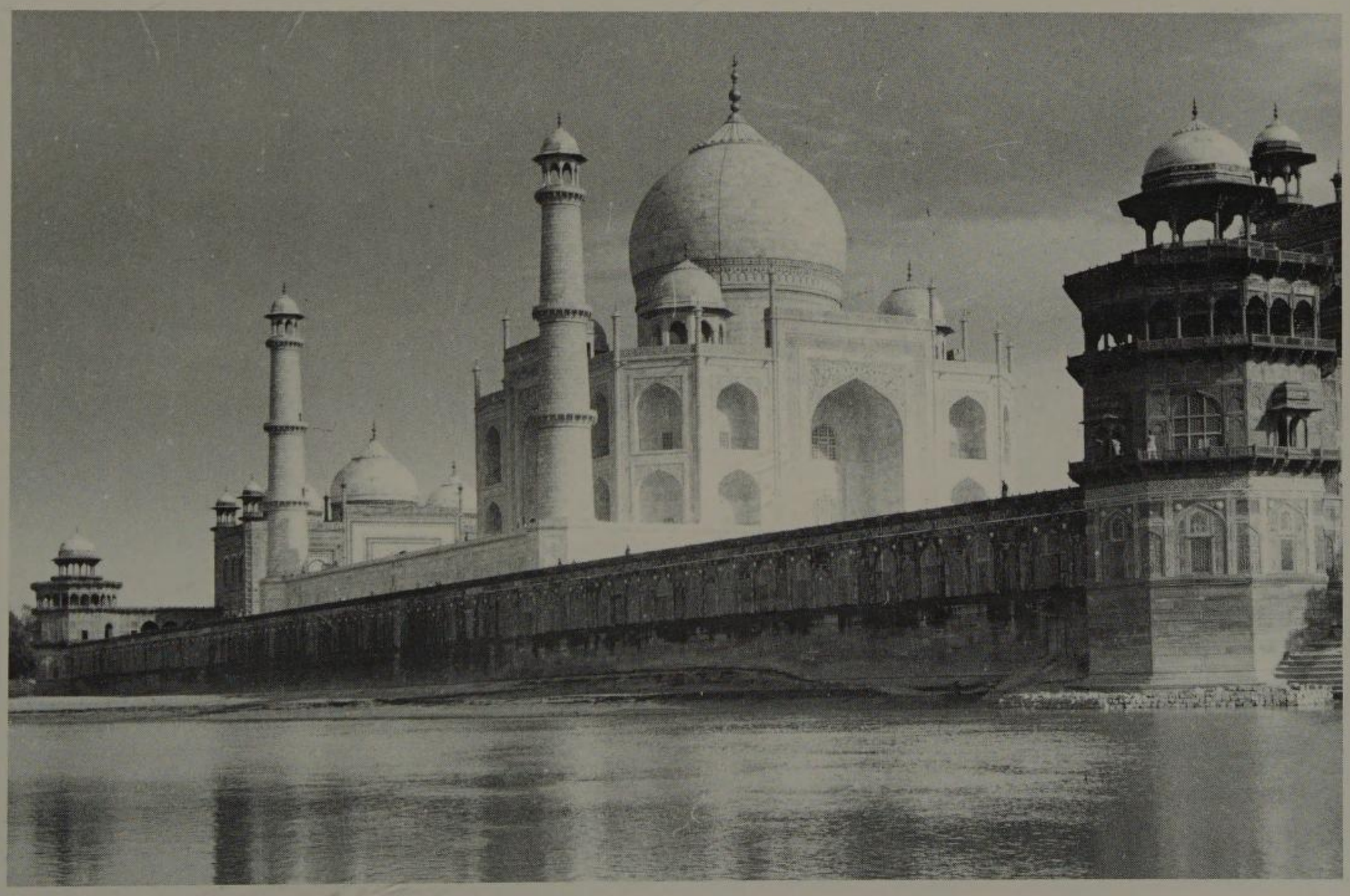
(24) Its foundation is stable like the earth,
And firm like the faith of the pious.

(25) I know not who with such magic conceived its beauty [lit., poured its color],
For even the "inconceivable" [lit., "not-pouring"] has taken refuge here.

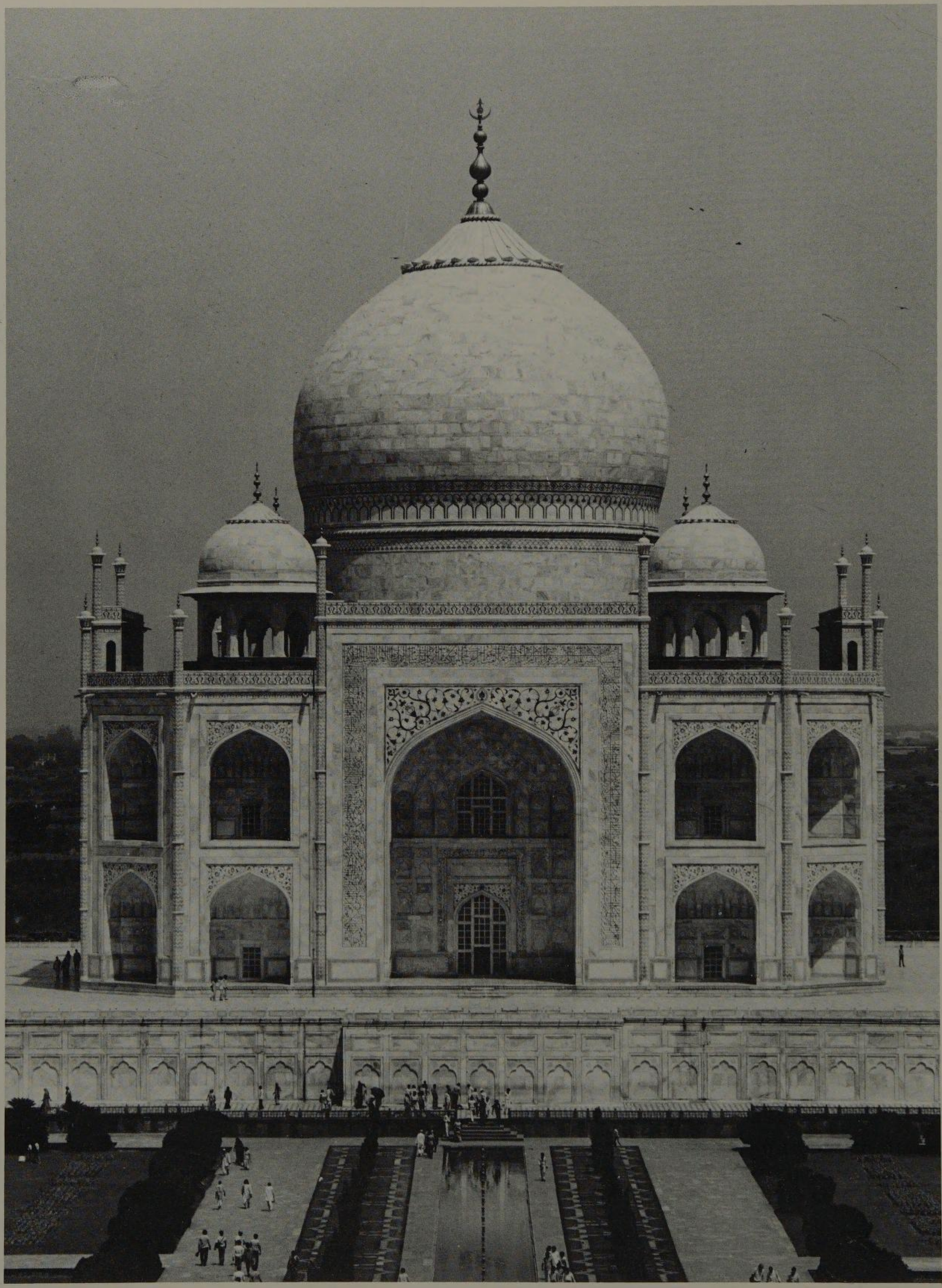
(26) When they busied themselves with its construction,
They achieved thereby perpetual fame.

(27) When the hand of perpetuity laid that foundation,
Impermanence ran fearfully to hide in the desert.

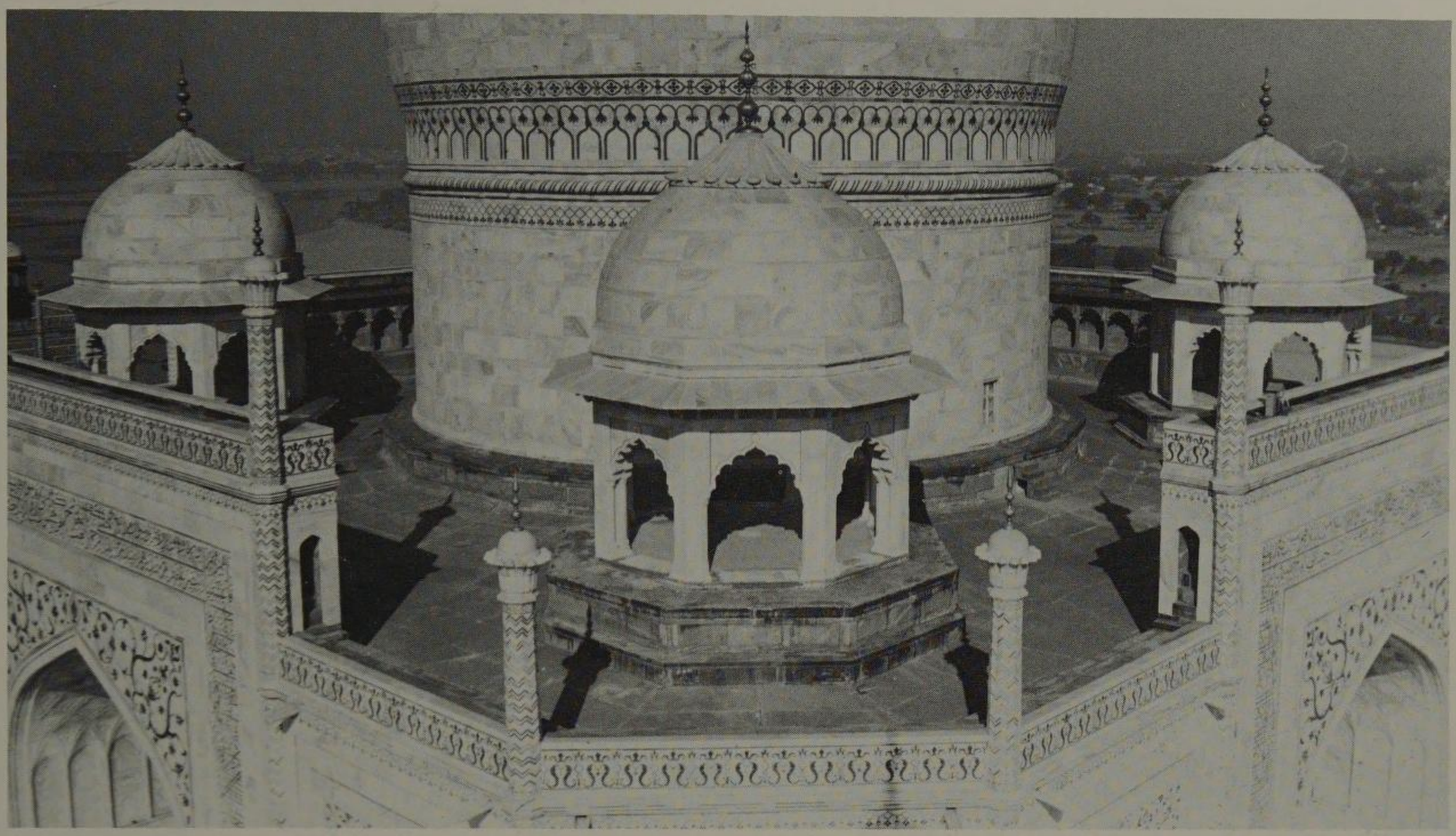
19. Taj Mahal, view of tomb, mosque and assembly hall, facing north.



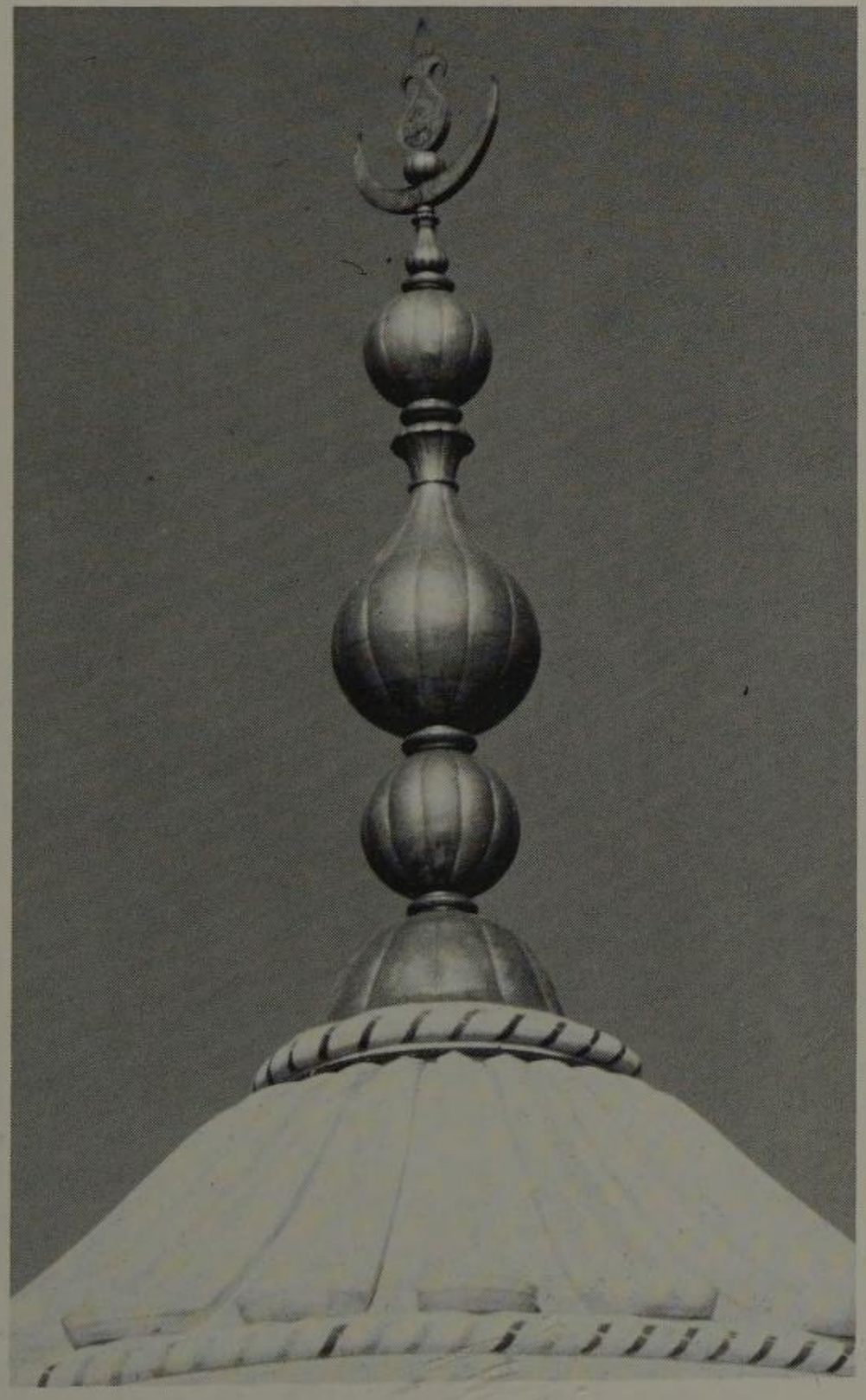
20. View of tomb and plinth towers, from river, facing southeast.



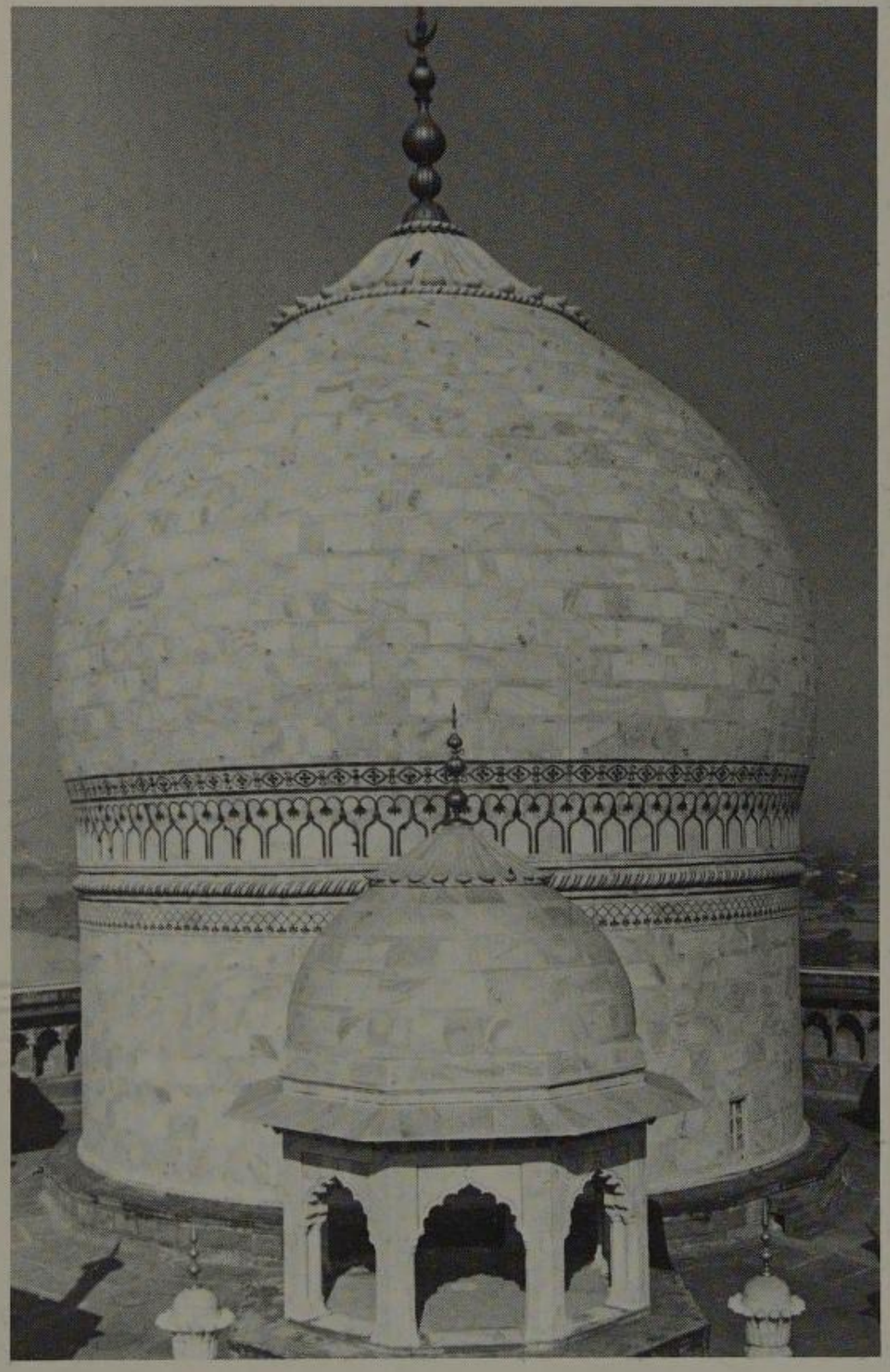
21. South facade of tomb.



22. View of pavilions on roof of tomb, facing northwest.

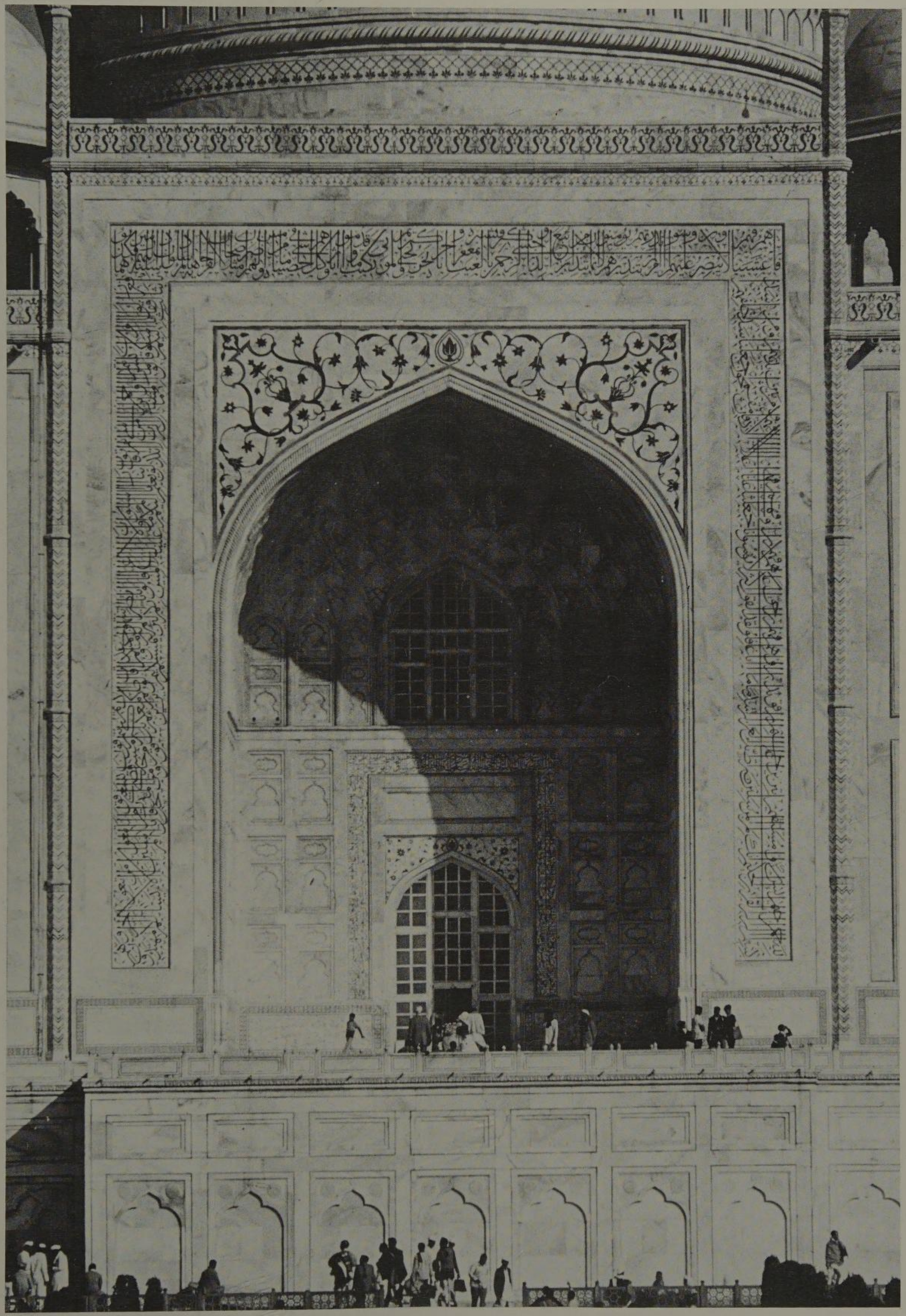


23. Finial above dome.

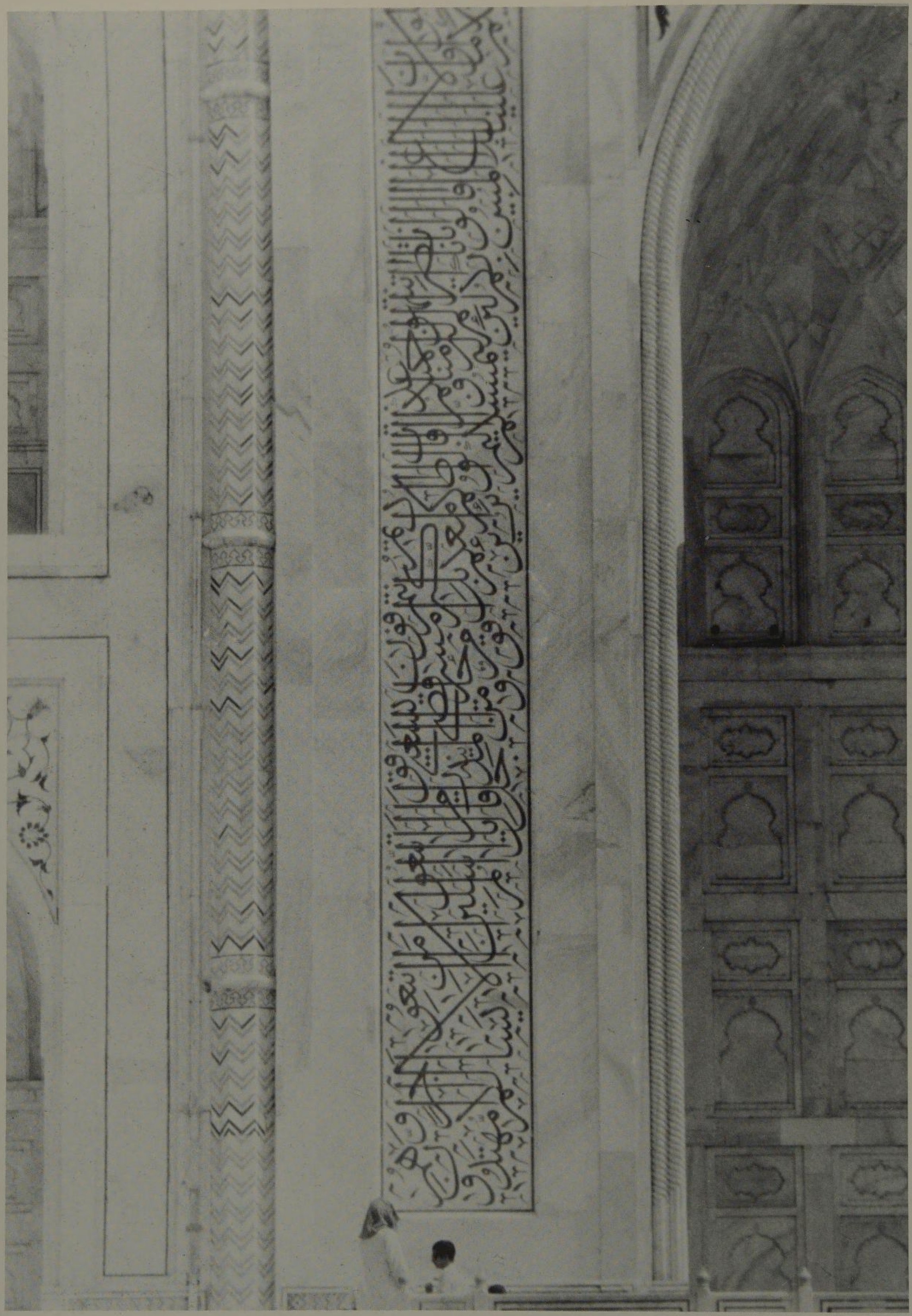


24. Detail of dome.

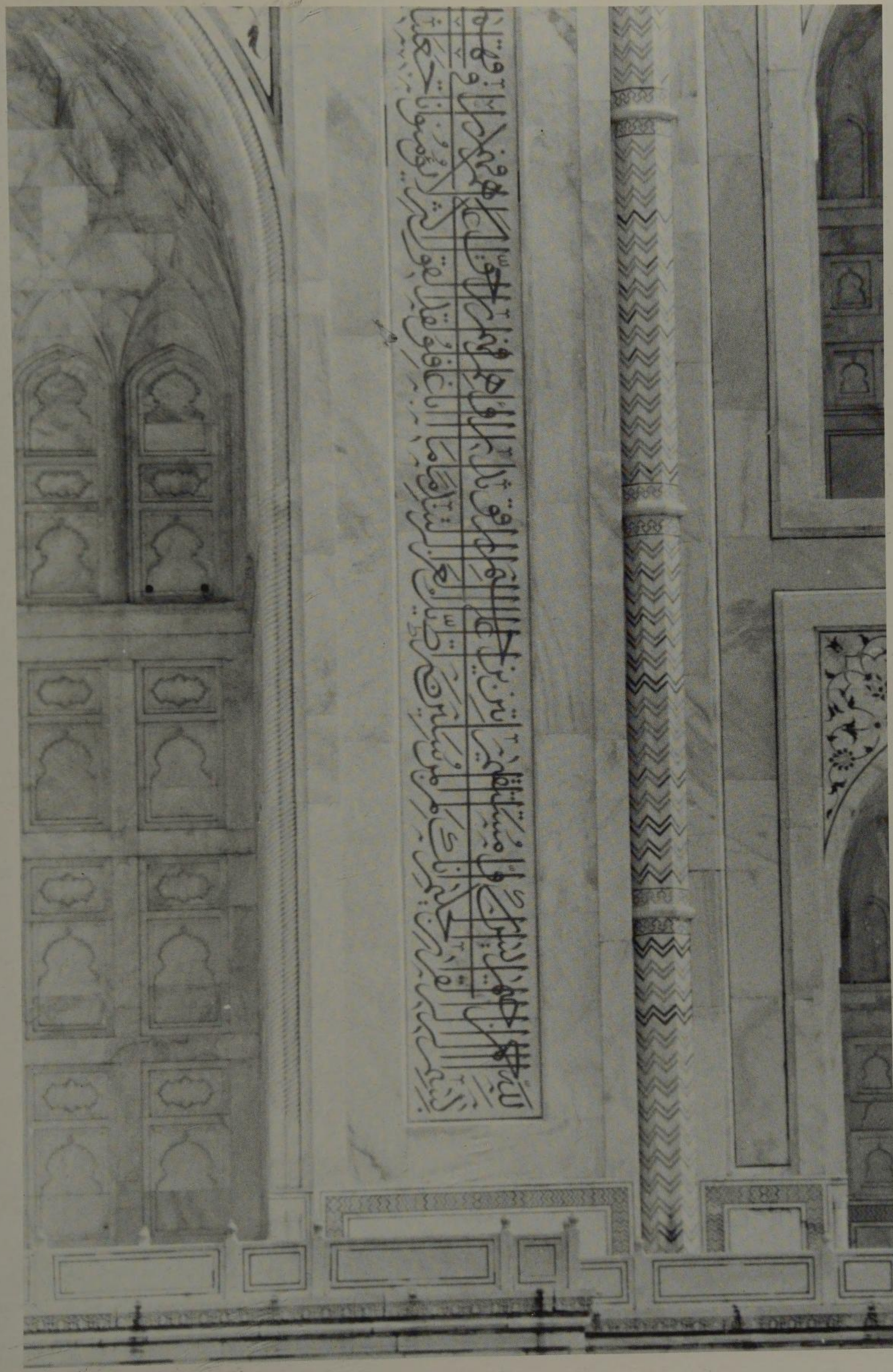
25. Detail of marble plinth of tomb, south side.



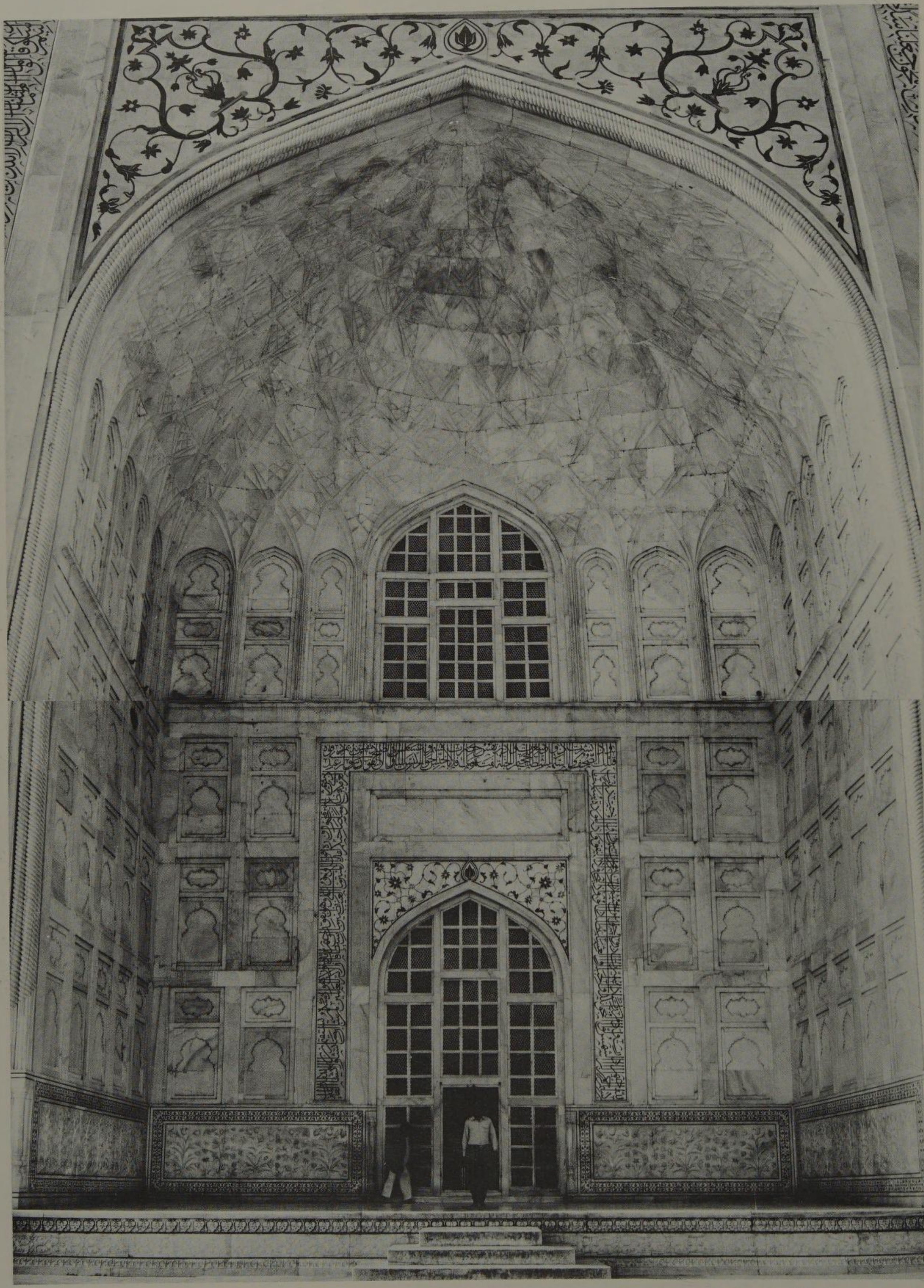
26. South arch of tomb, inscribed with Sura 36, *Ya Sin*, verses 1-21.



27. Detail of calligraphy on south arch, concluding with verse 21 of Sura *Ya Sin*.

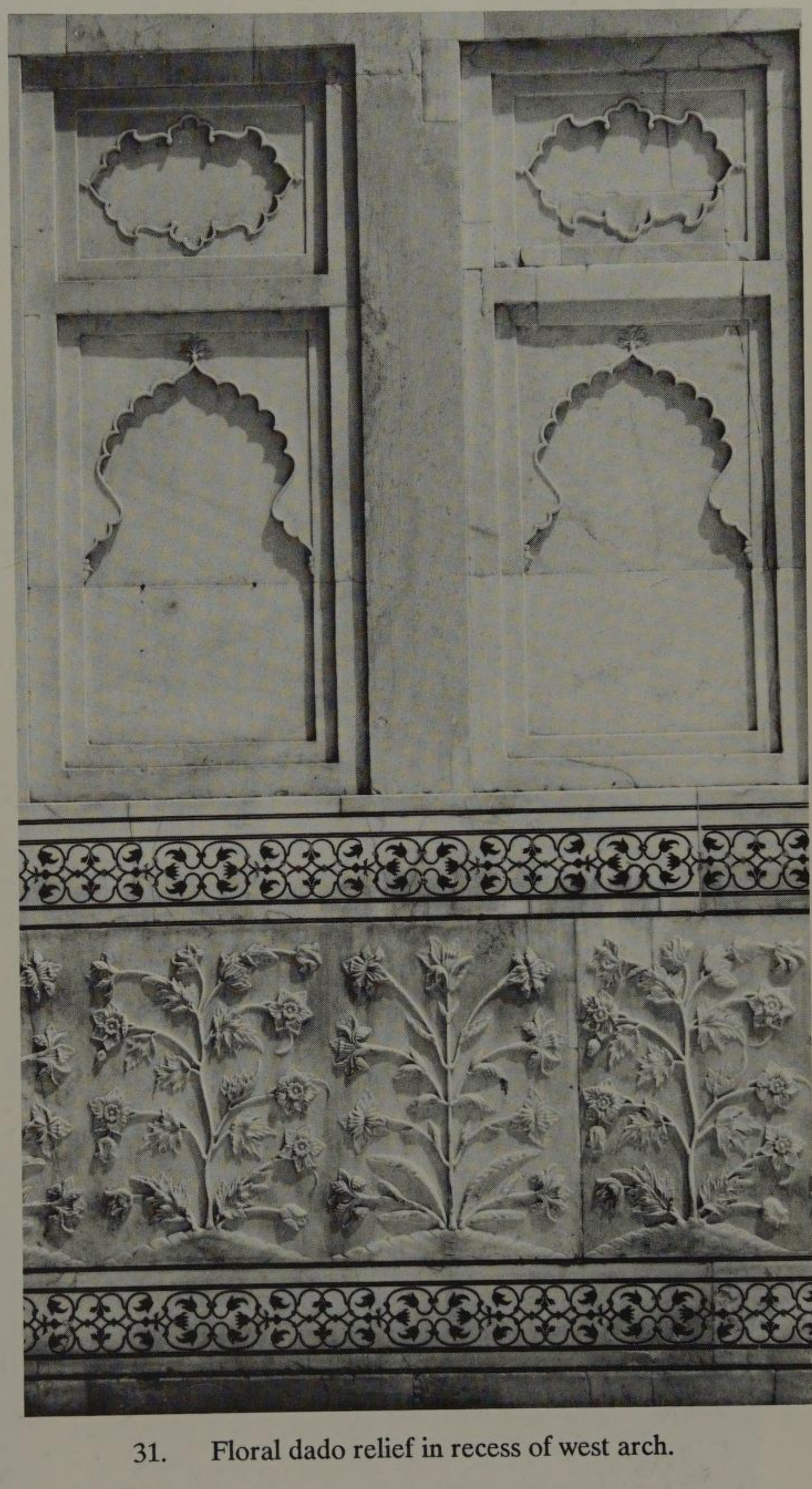


28. Detail of calligraphy on south arch, beginning verses of Sura *Ya Sin*.

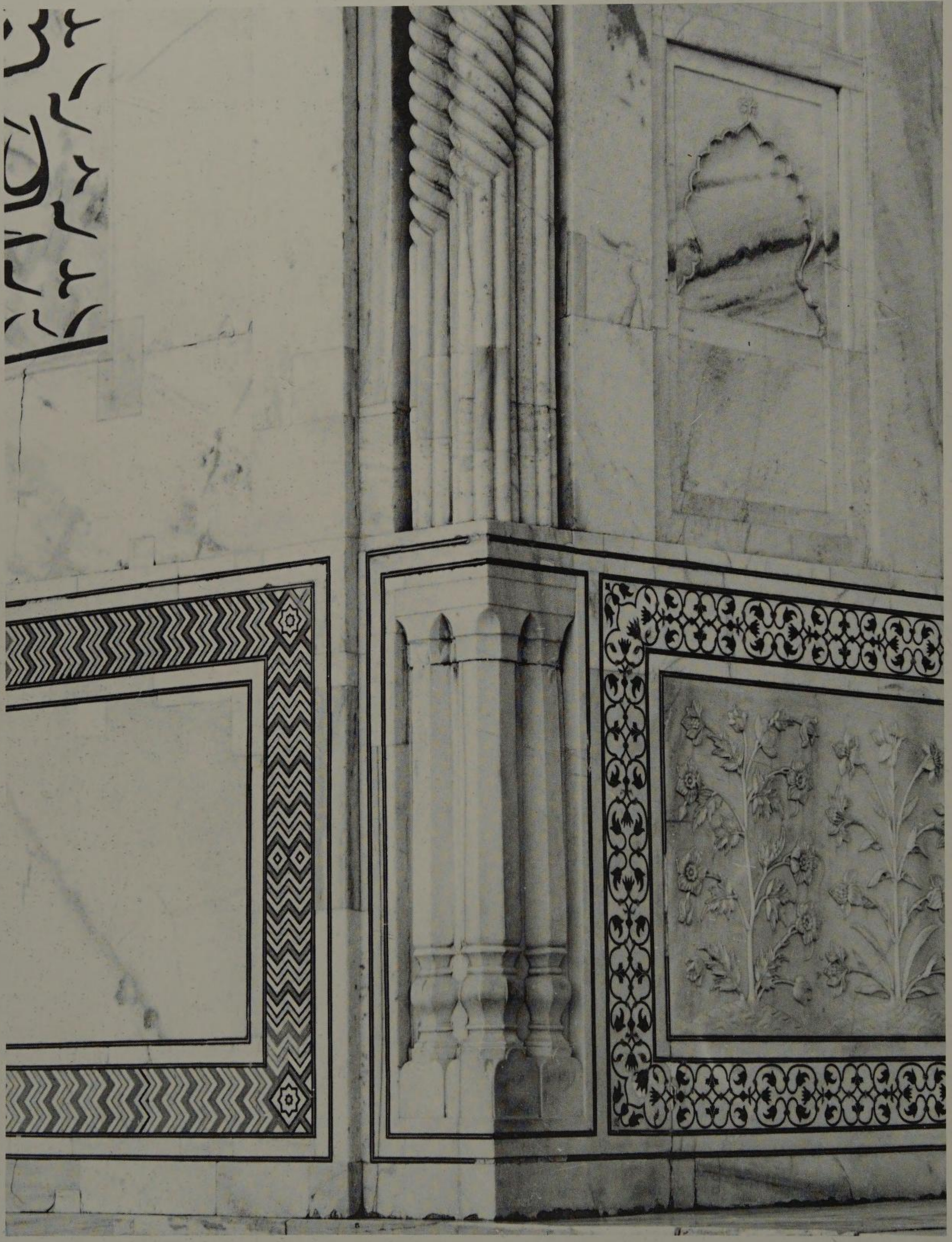


29. Recess of south arch and entrance door, inscribed with Sura 81, *al-Takwir*, "The Folding Up."

30. Detail of floral relief

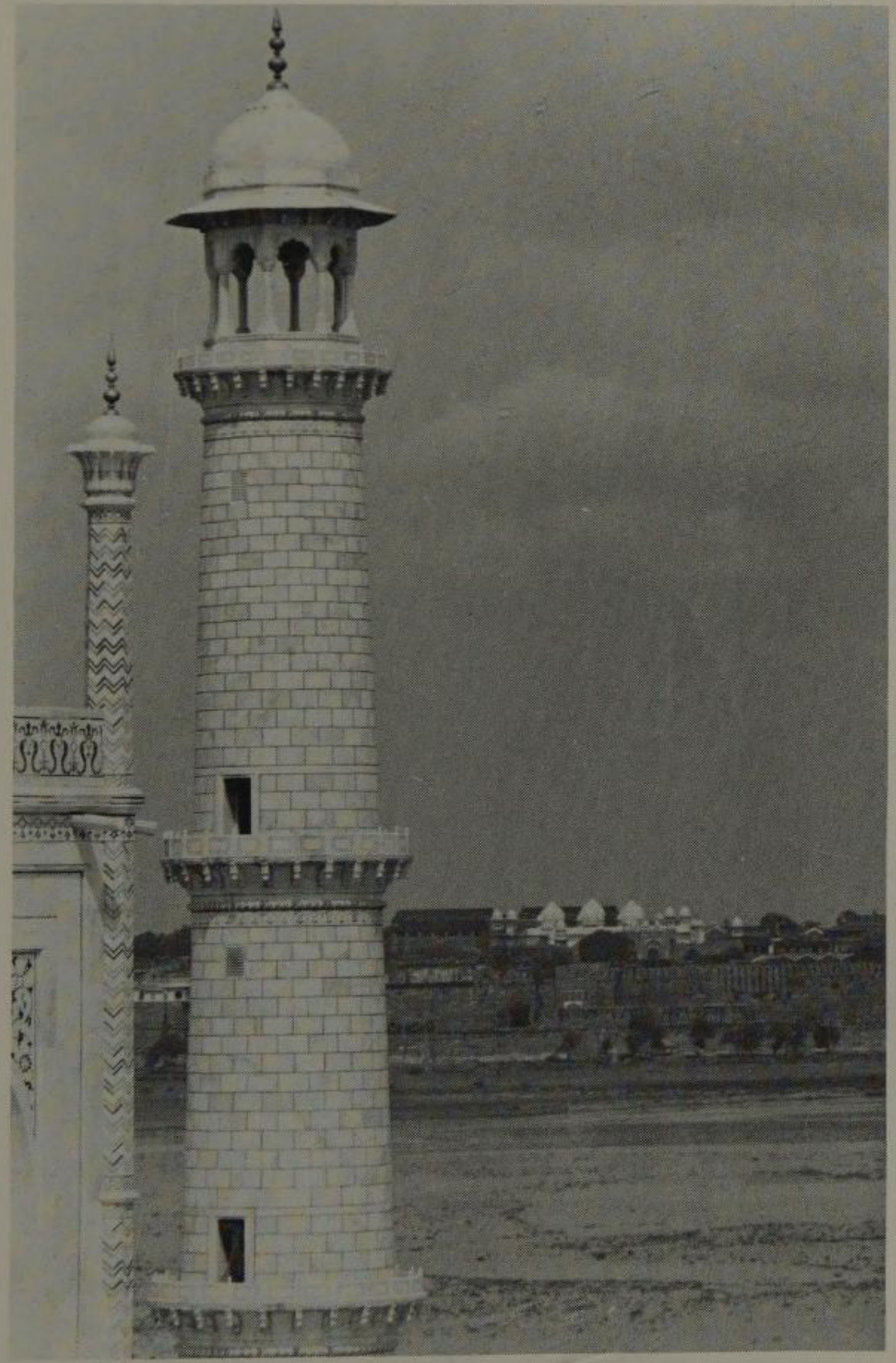


31. Floral dado relief in recess of west arch.

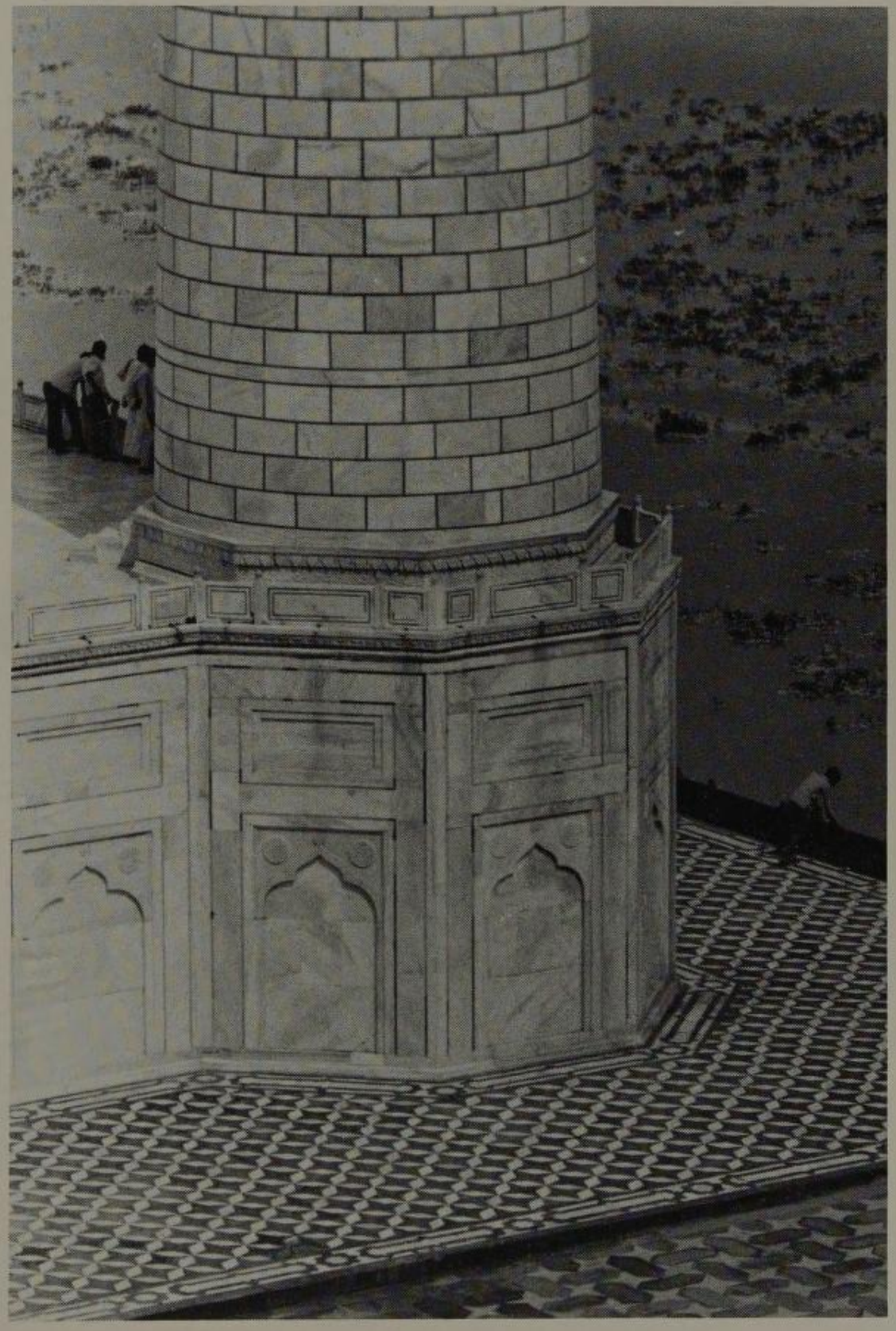


32. Detail of pilaster, left side of west arch.

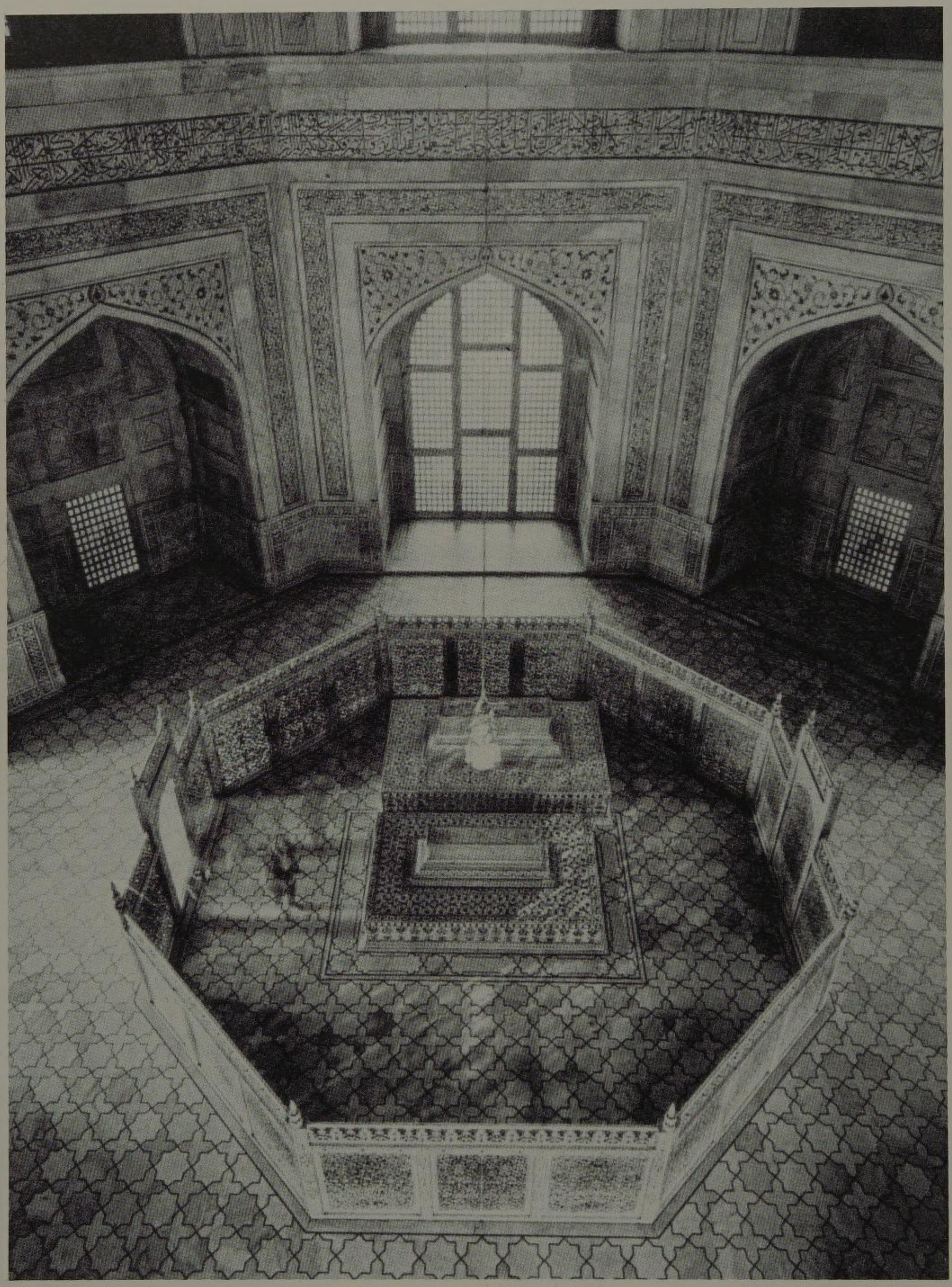
33. East side of marble plinth, showing entrance to storage rooms.



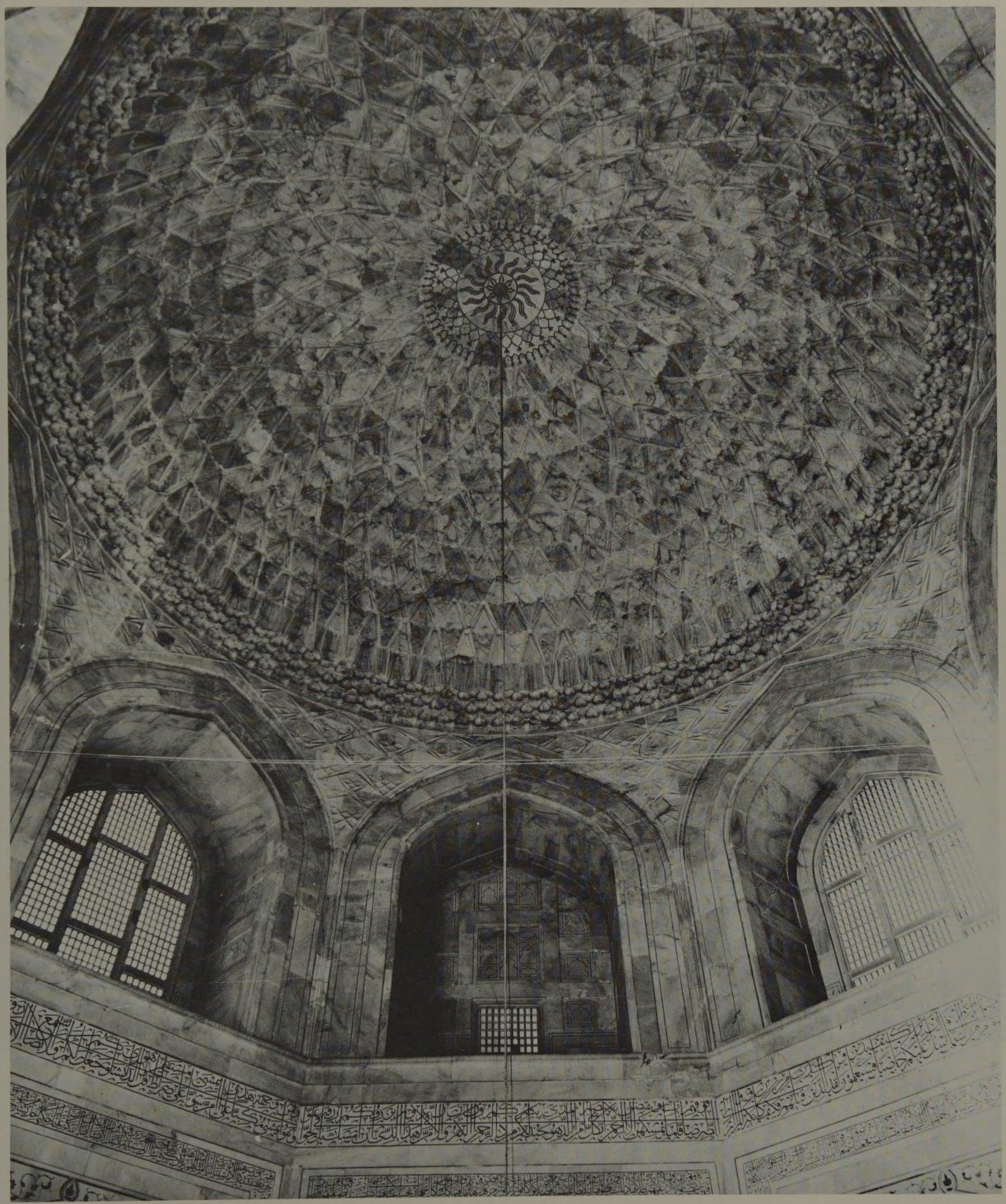
34. Detail of top of minaret



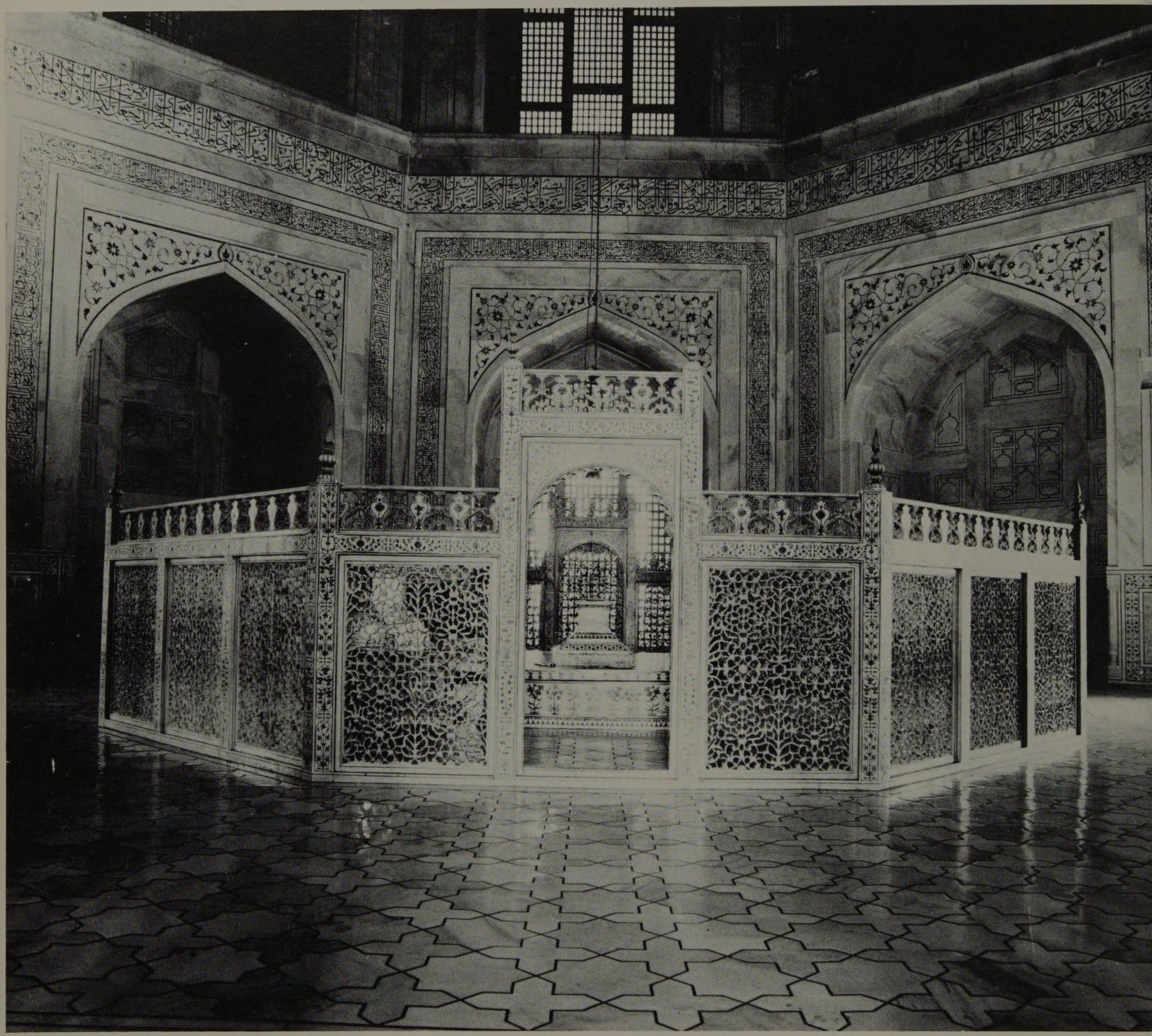
35. Base of northeast minaret.



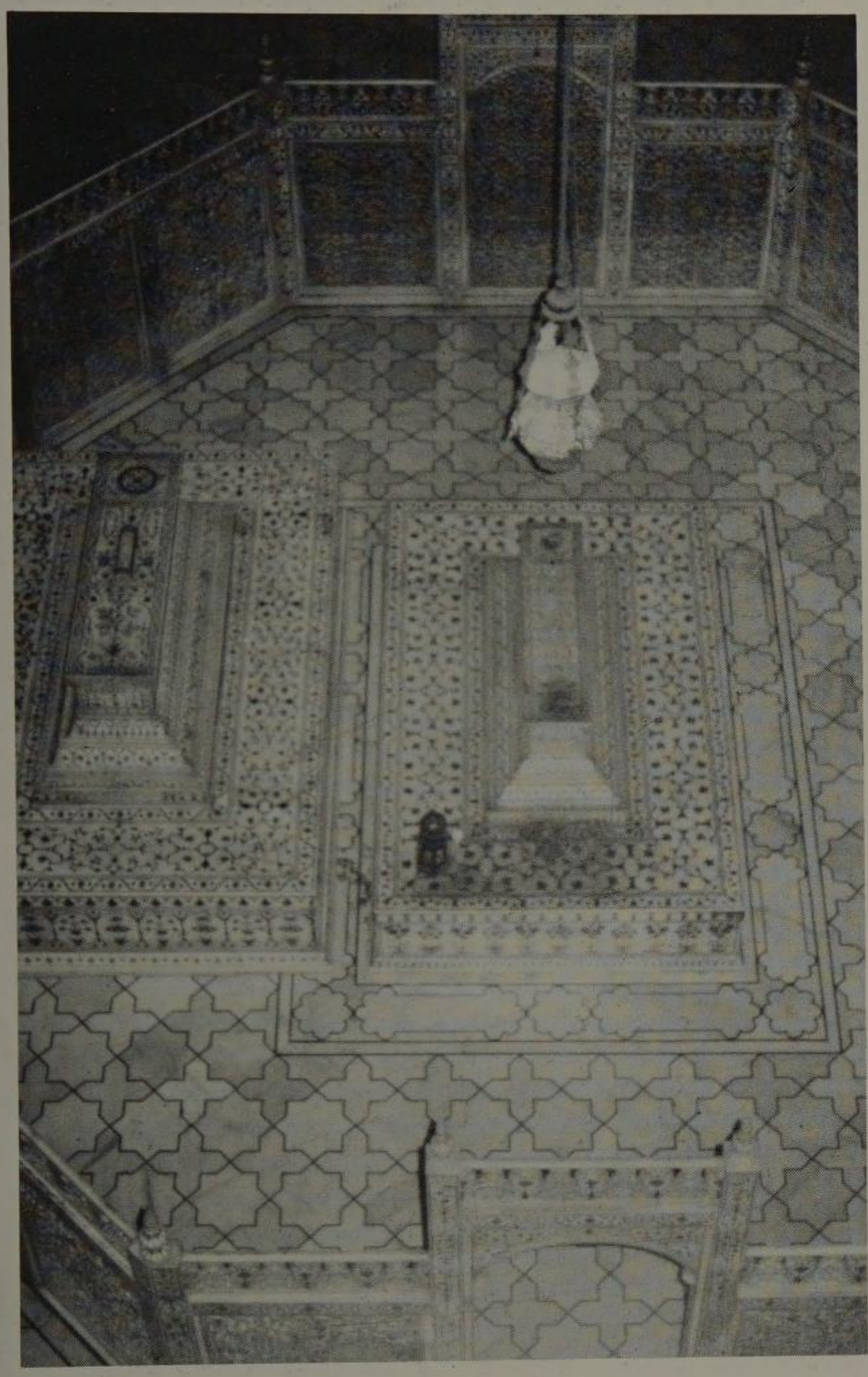
36. Domed hall, view of octagonal marble railing surrounding cenotaphs, facing west.



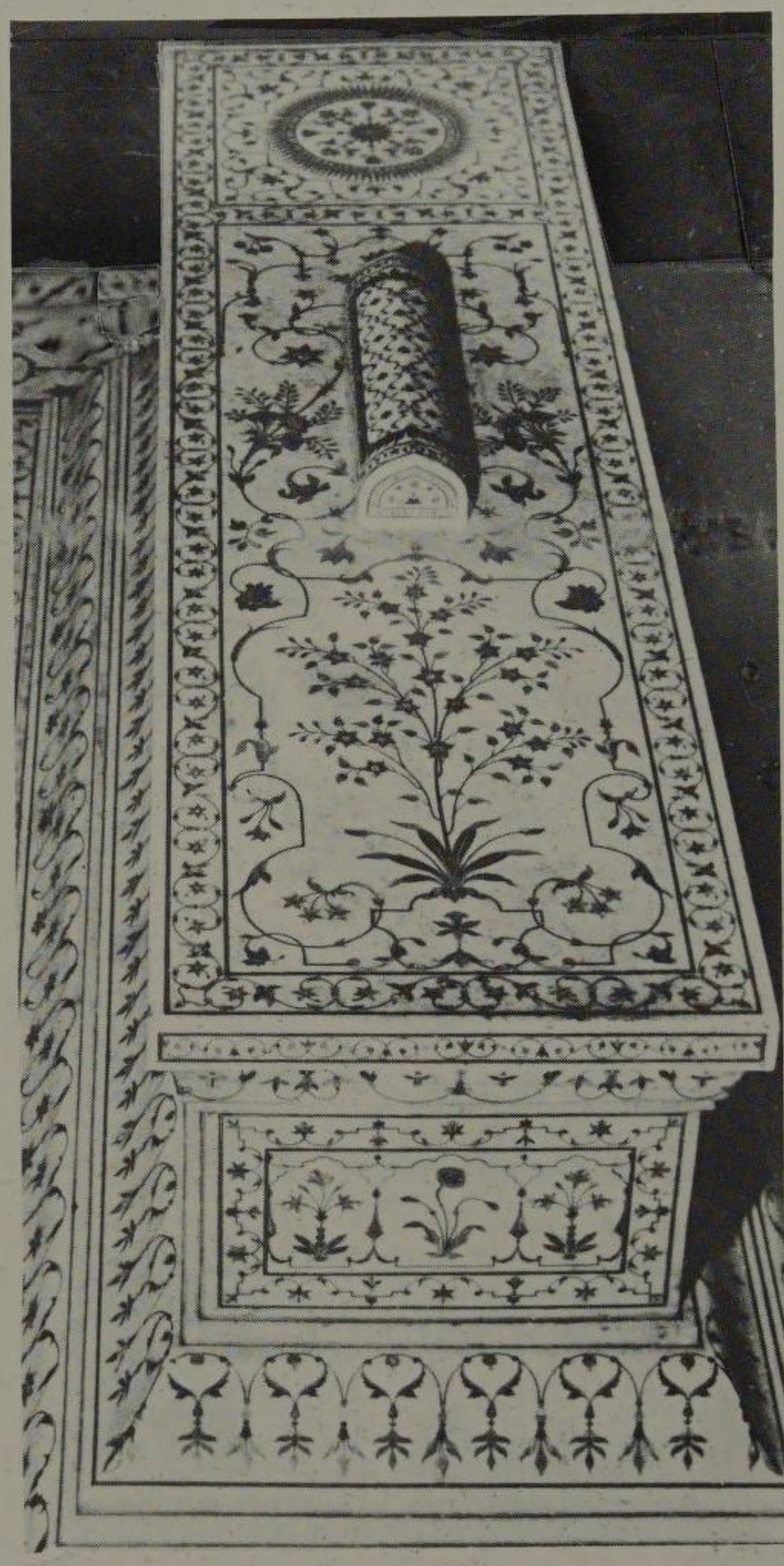
37. Ceiling of dome.



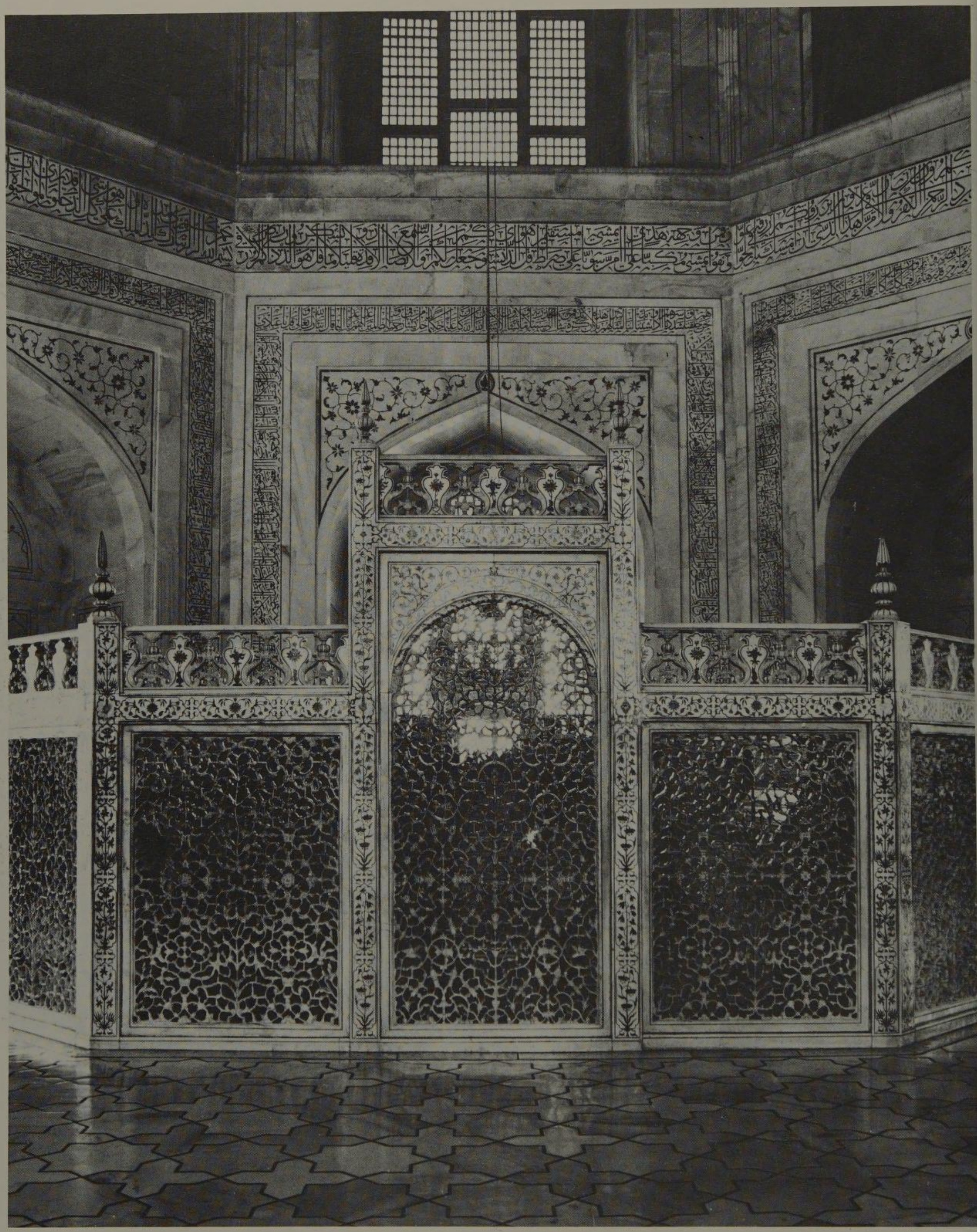
38. Marble railing surrounding cenotaphs, facing north.



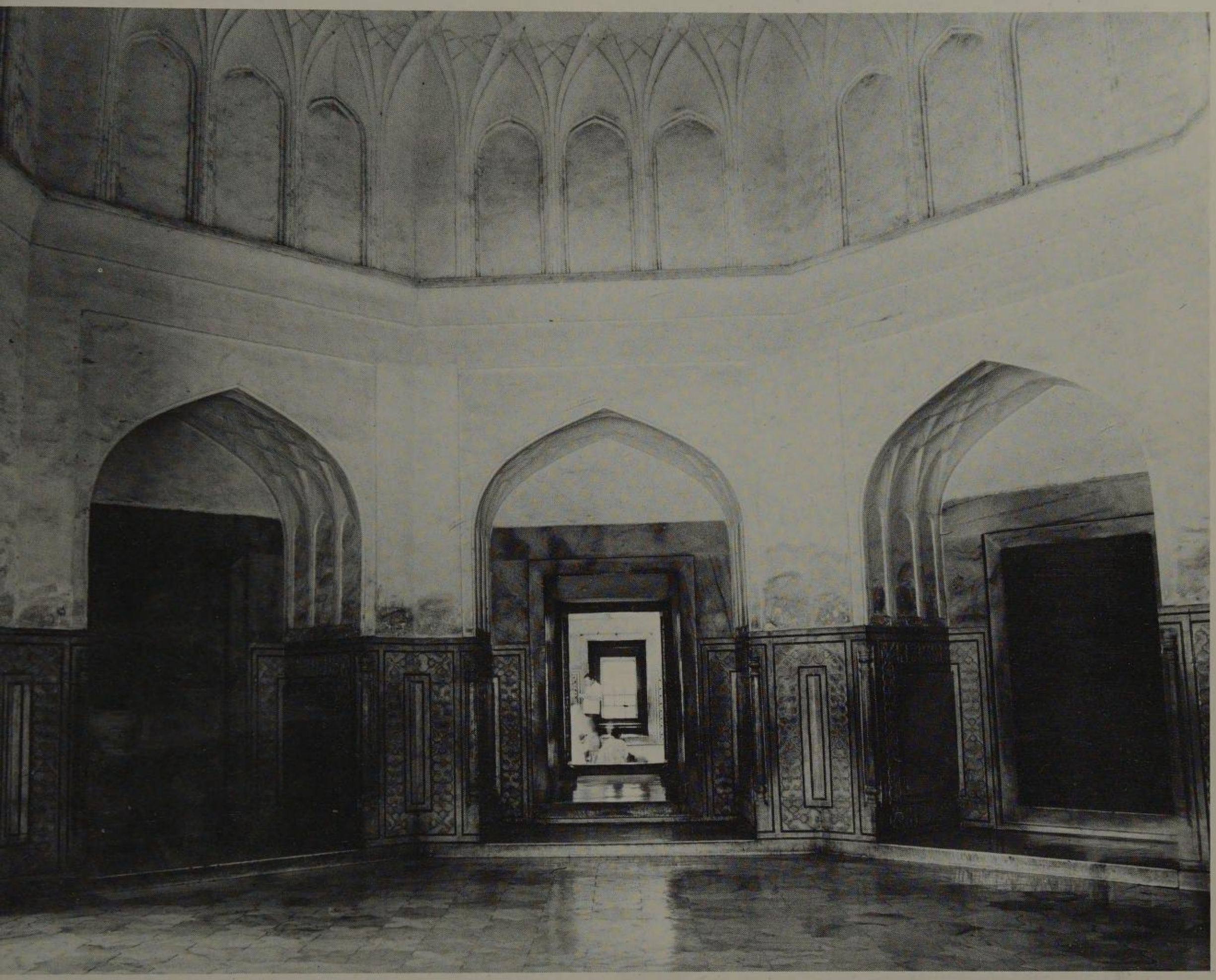
39. View of cenotaphs from above, facing north.



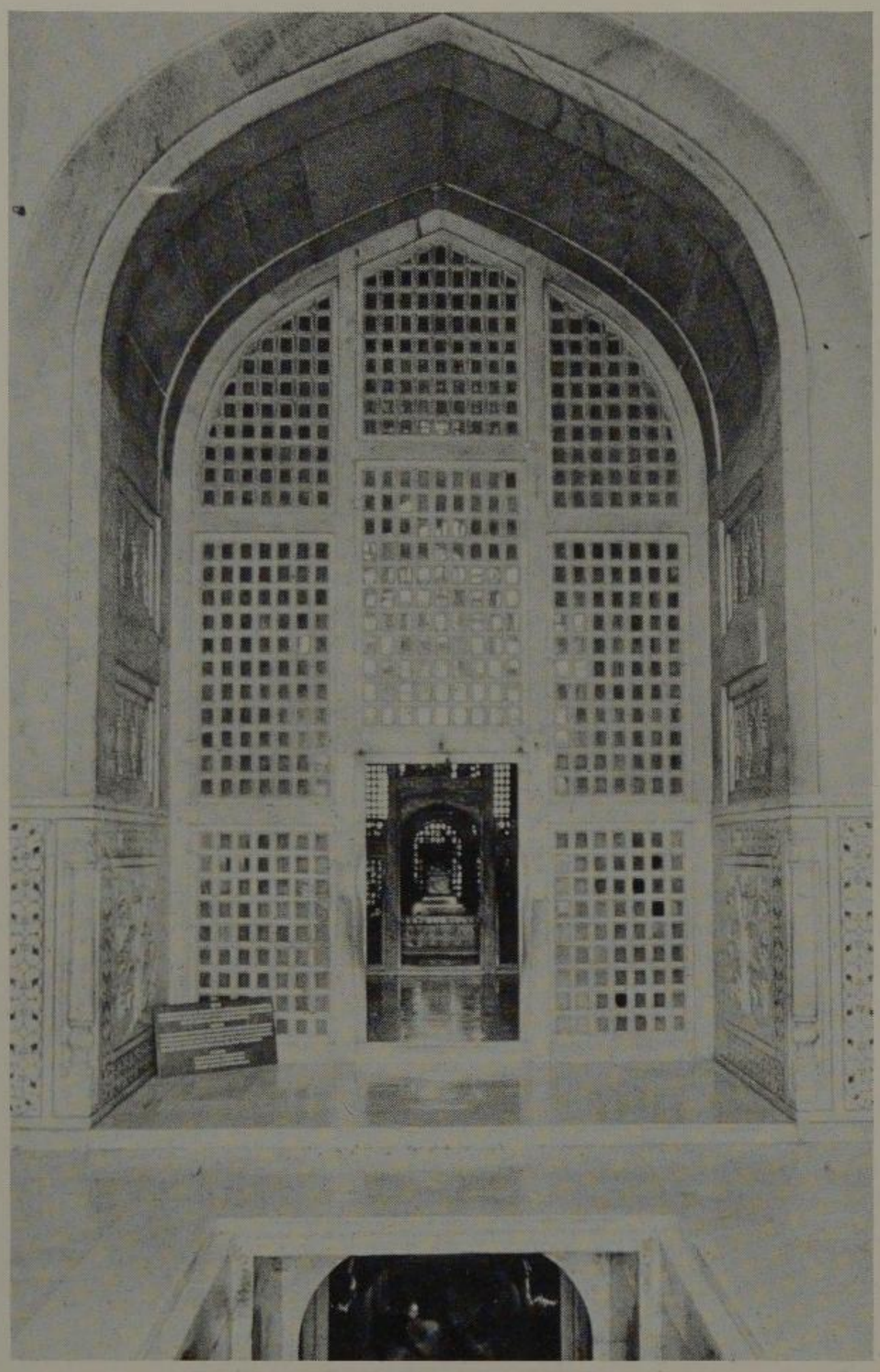
40. Cenotaph of Shah Jahan.



41. Marble railing, facing south.

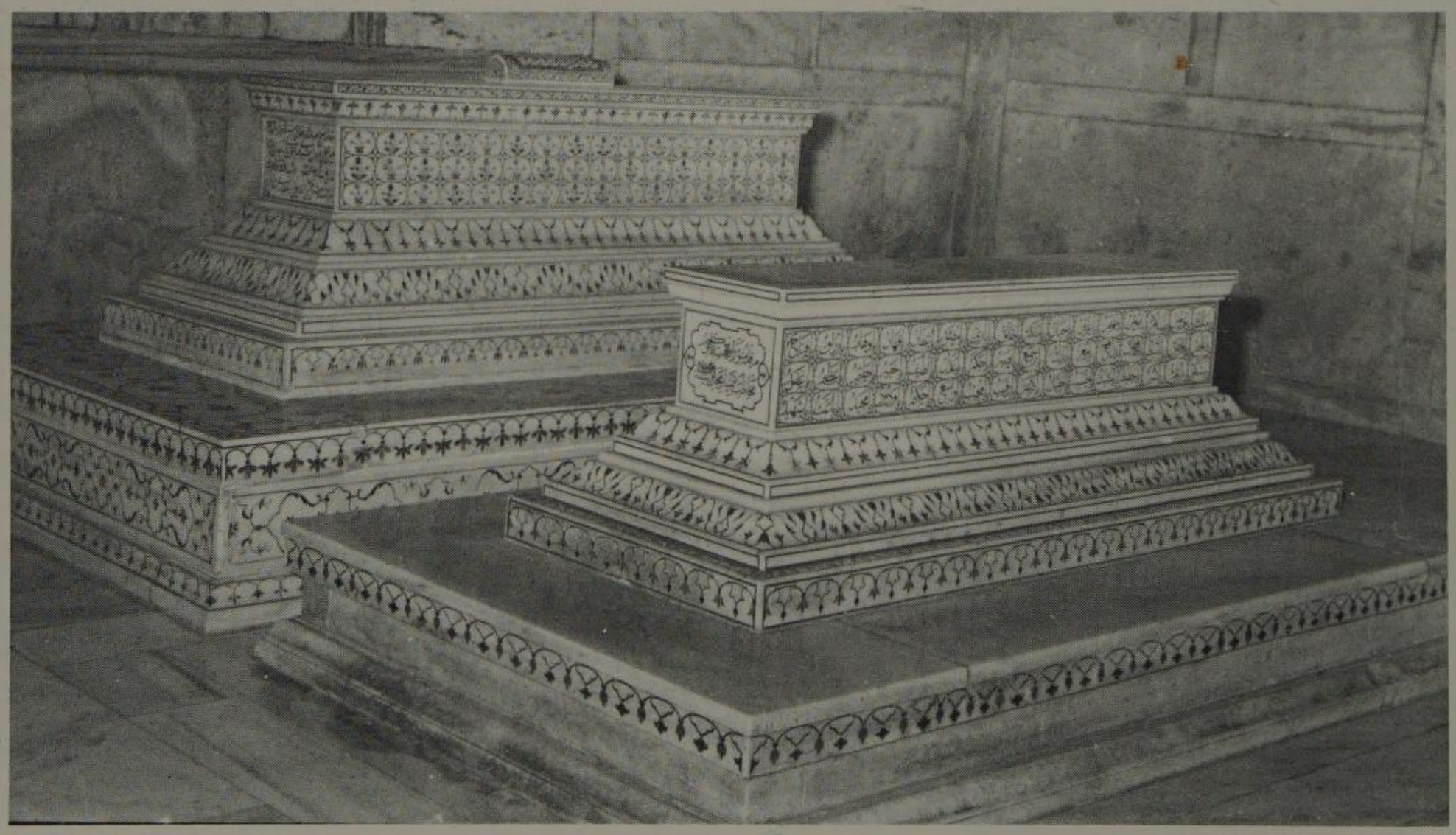


42. Domed chamber at southeast corner of tomb, facing west.

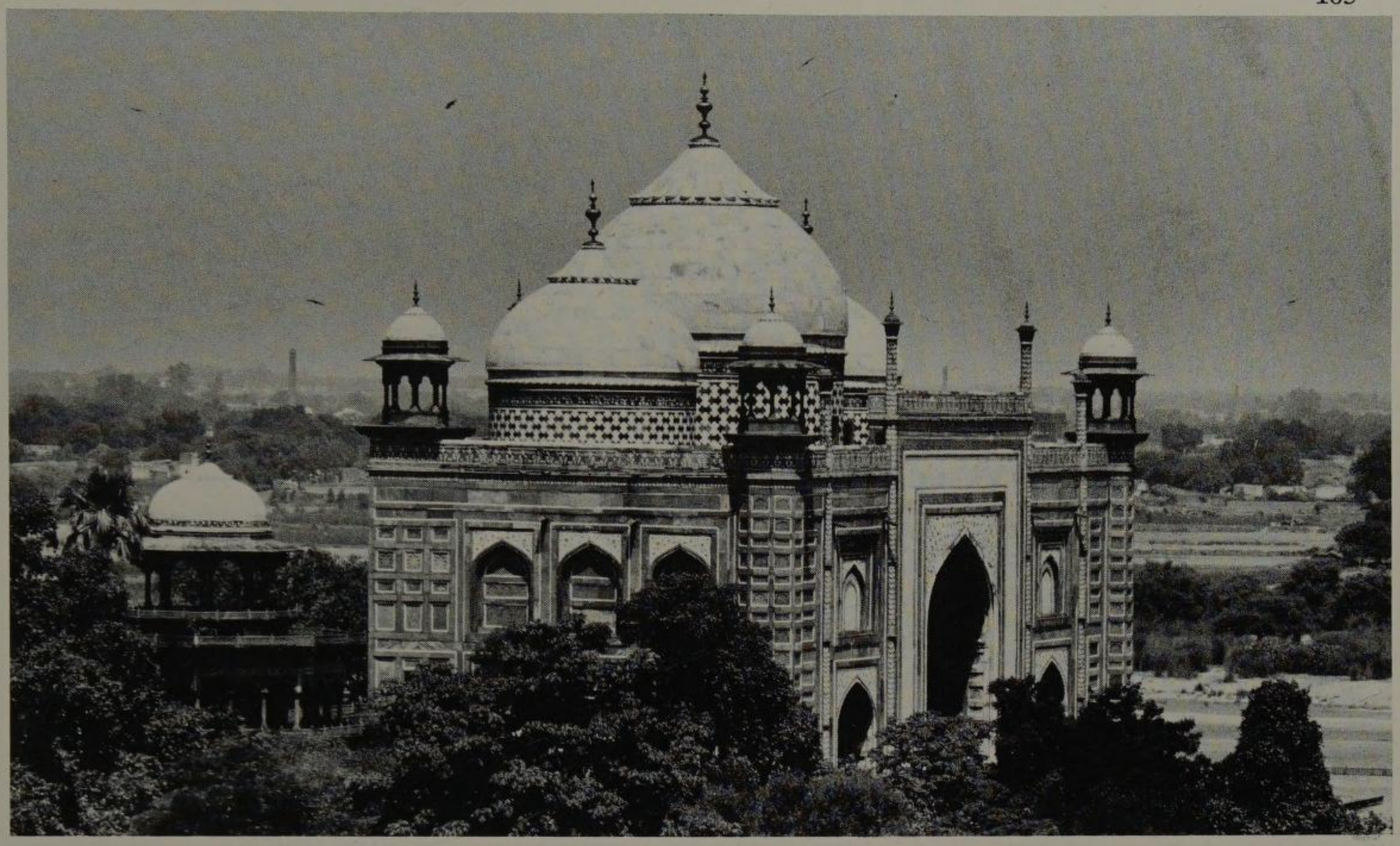


43. View of grilled door to interior hall and stair to crypt.

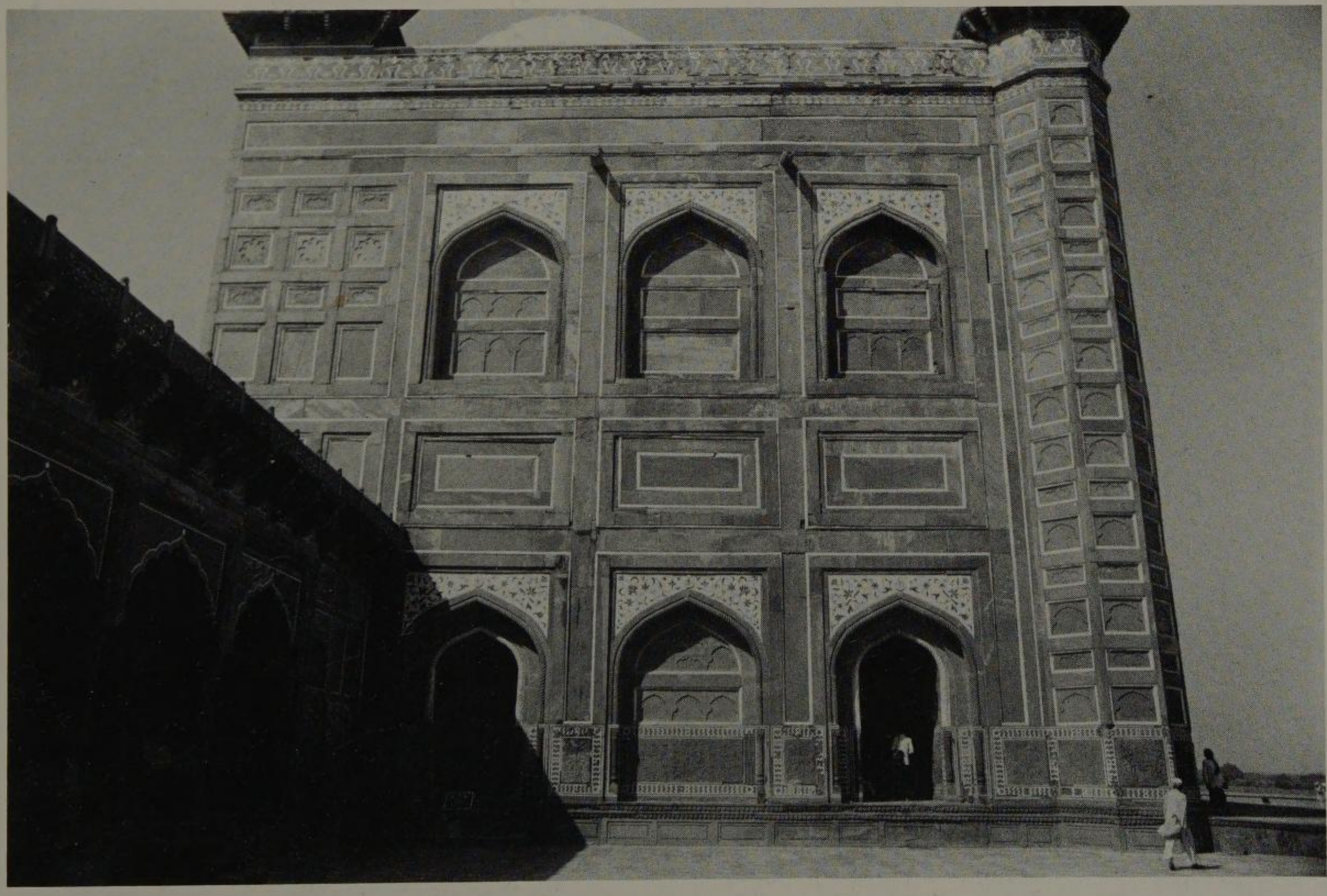
44. Entrance to crypt.



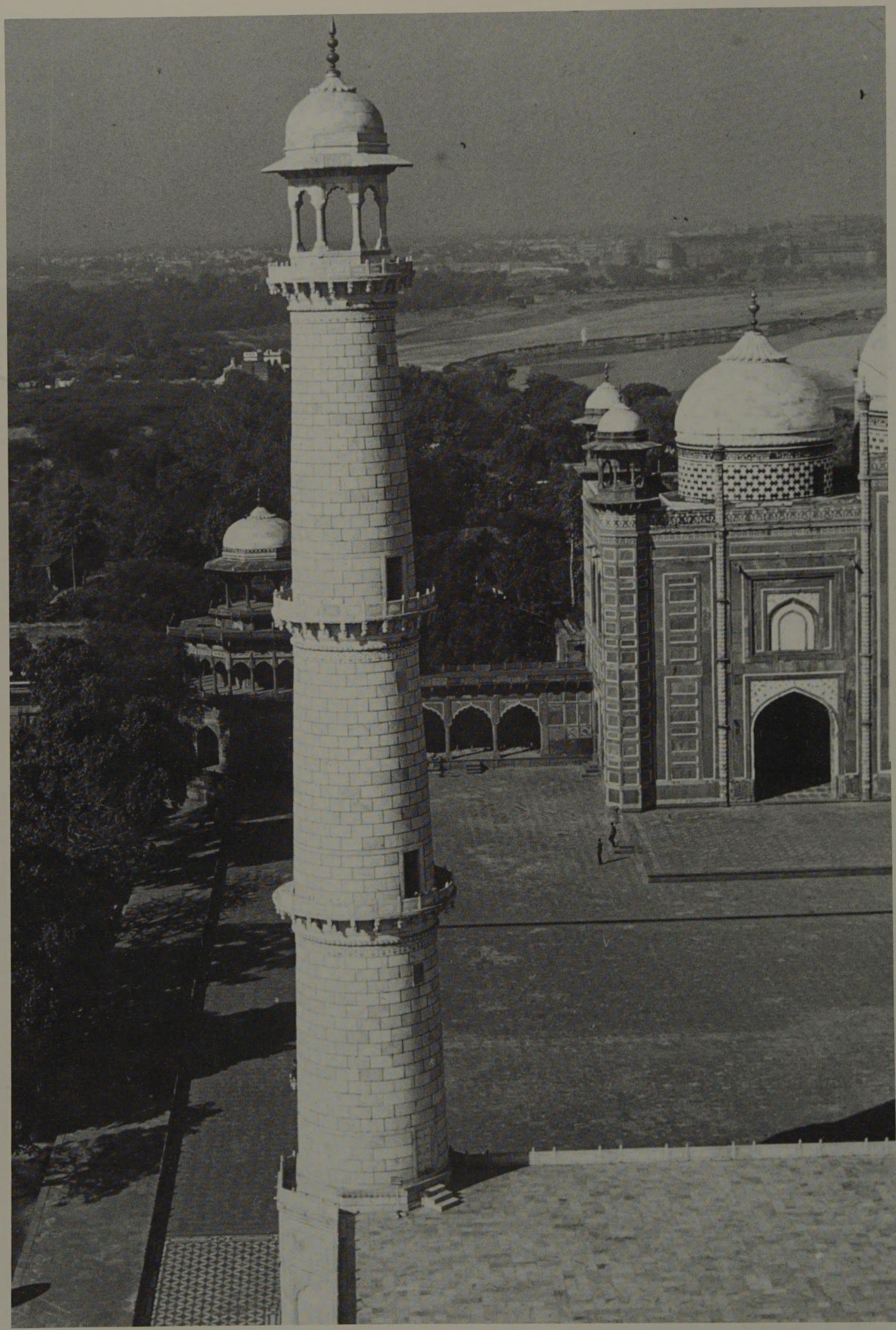
45. Cenotaphs of Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan in crypt, facing northwest.



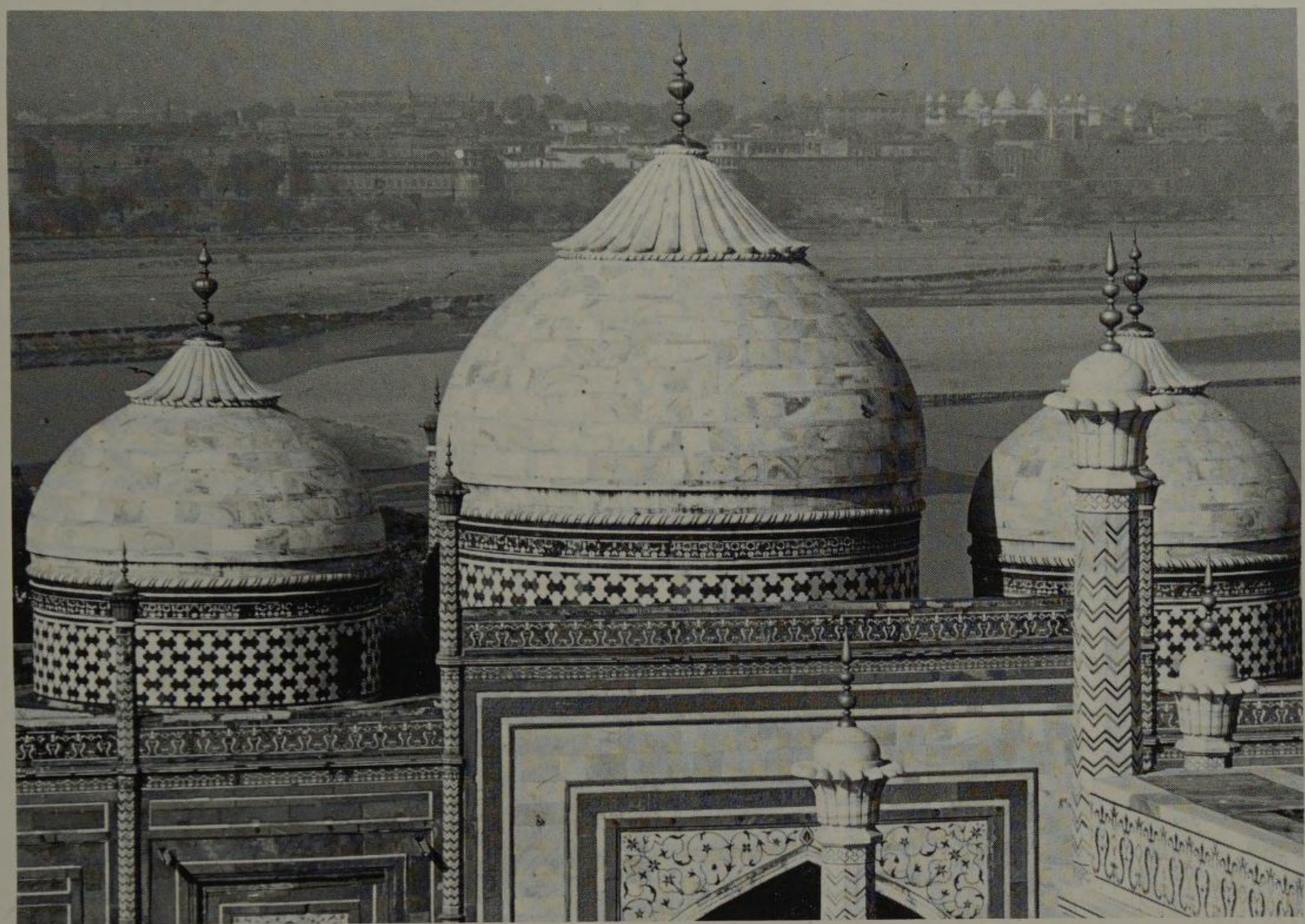
46. View of mosque from top of gateway, facing north west.



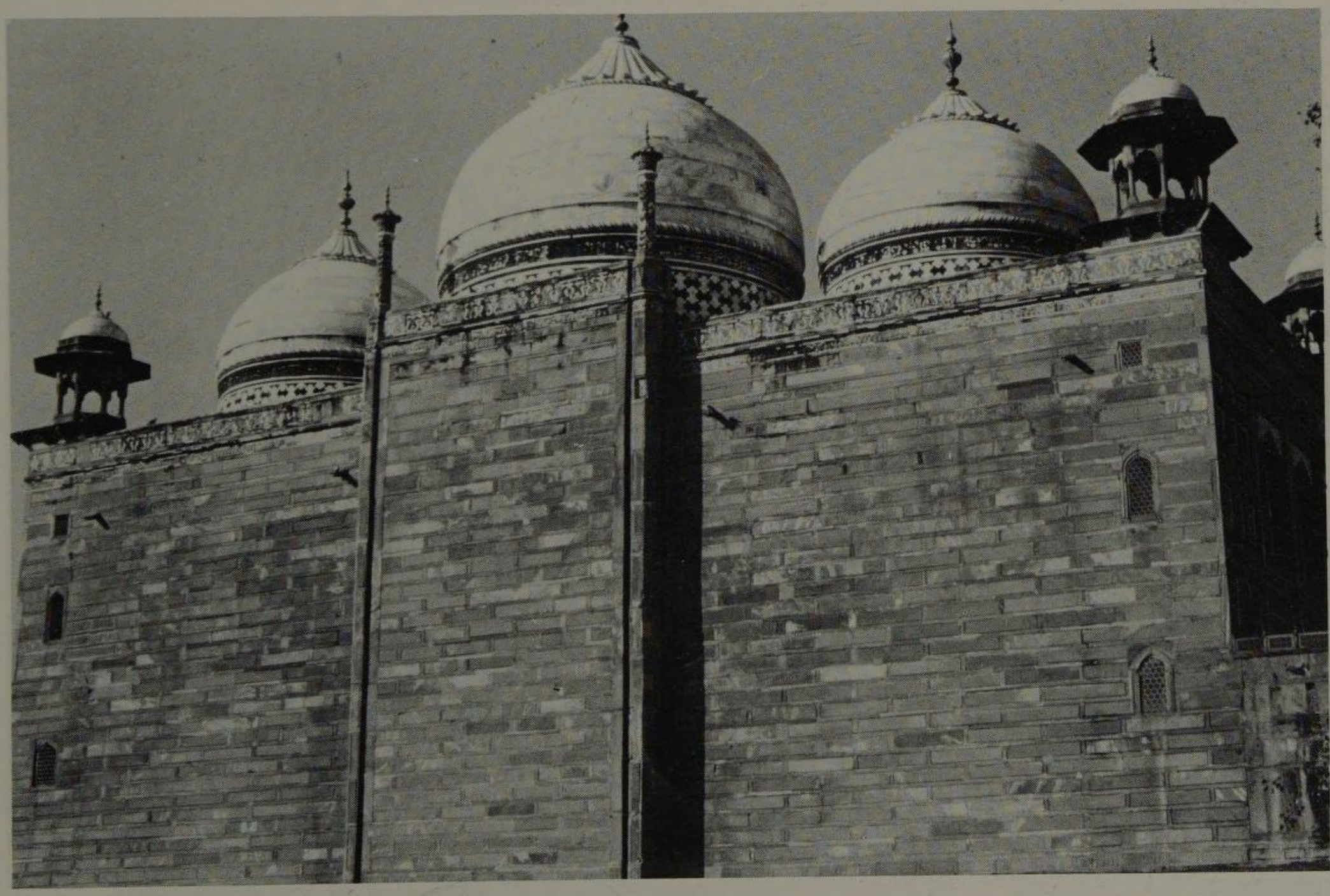
47. South side of mosque.



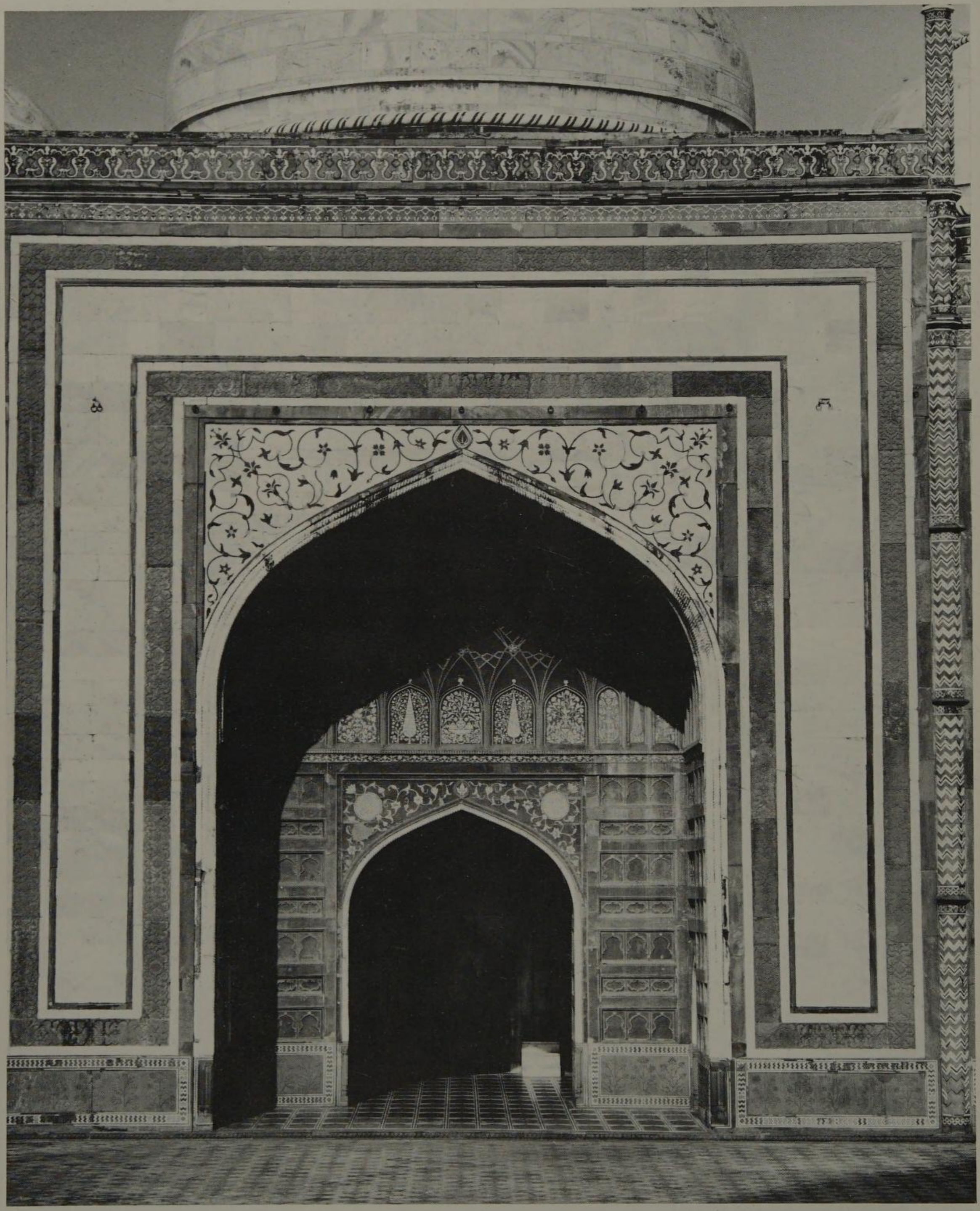
48. View of southwest minaret and mosque, facing west.



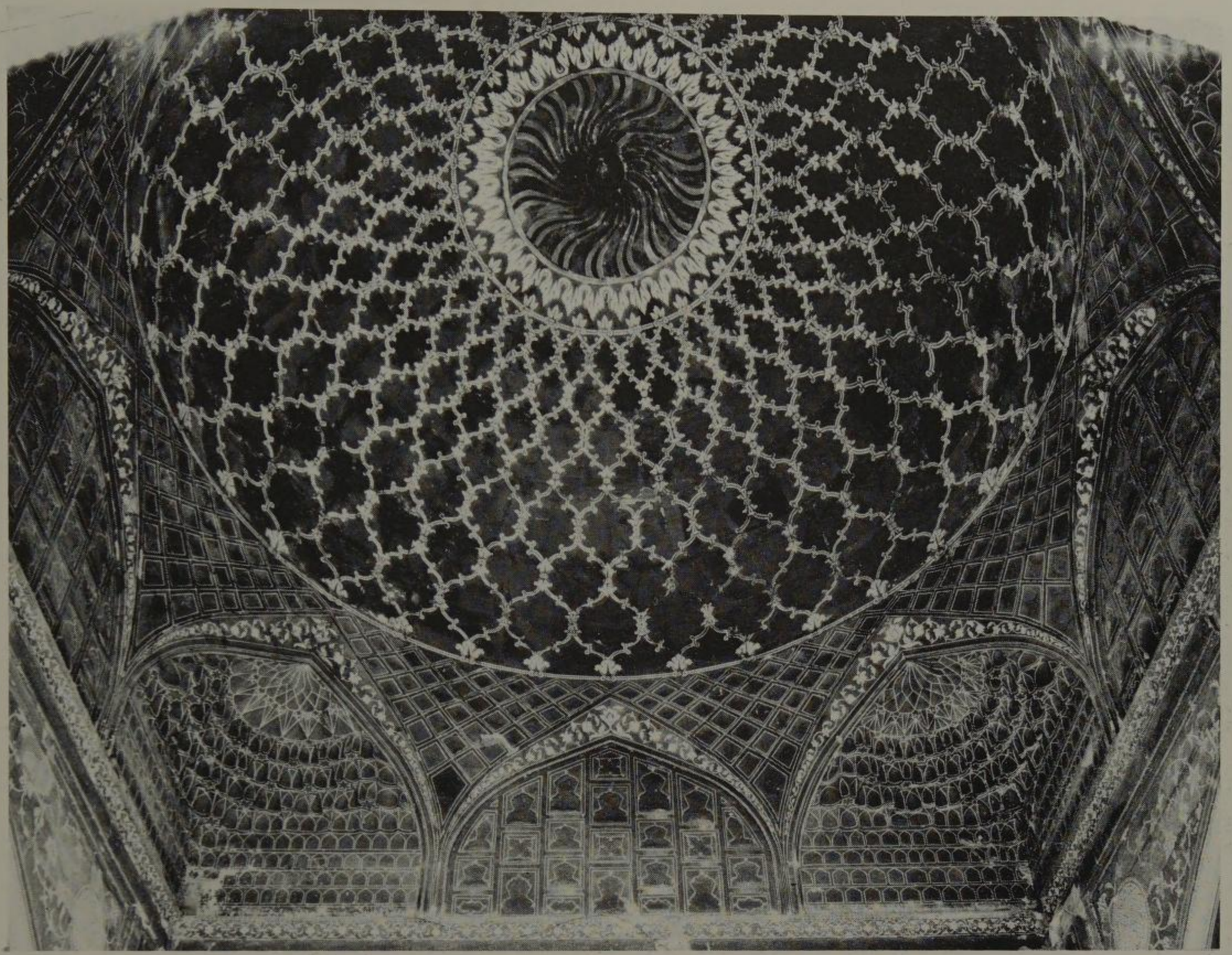
49. Detail of domes of mosque.



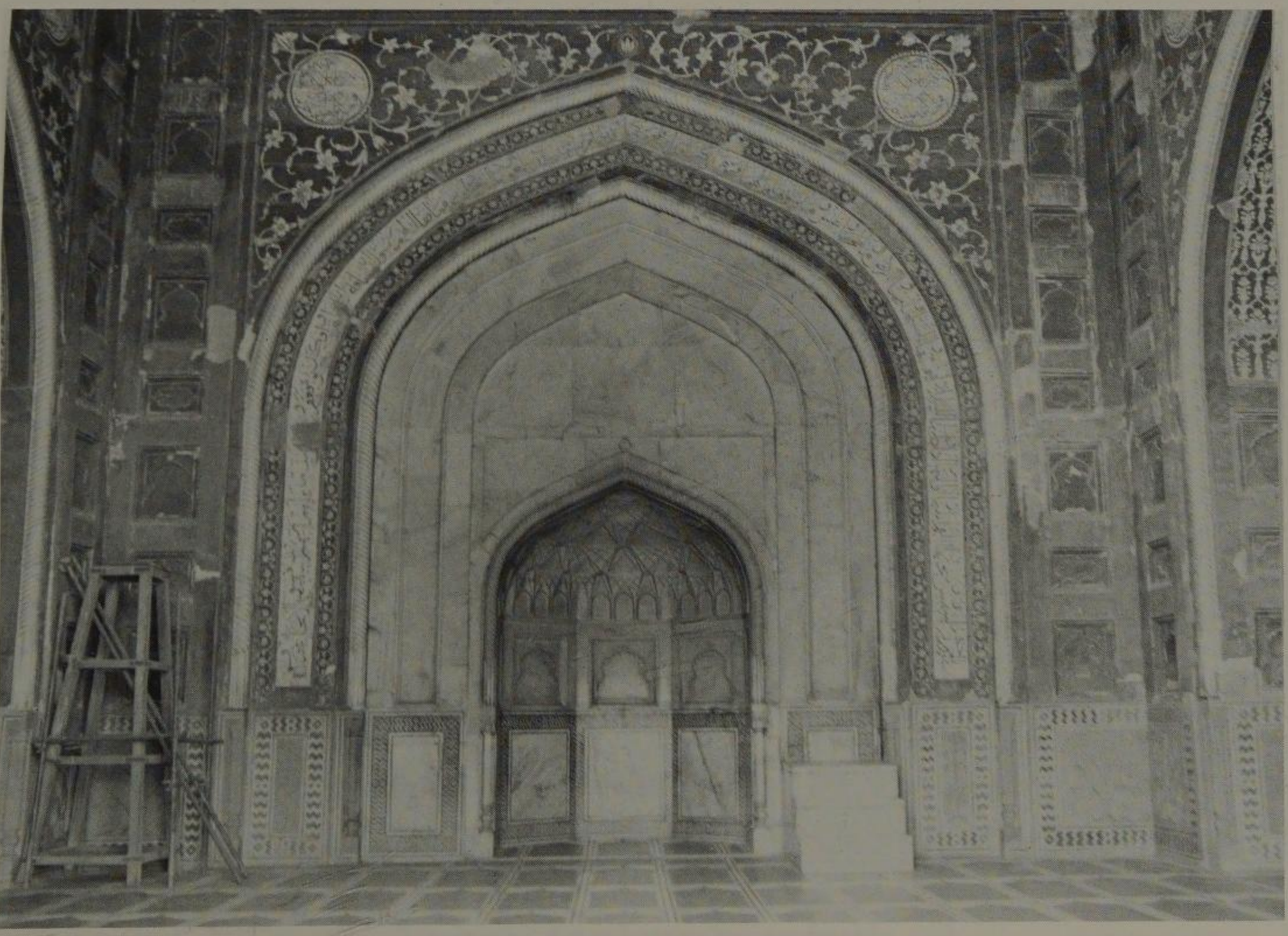
50. Rear of assembly hall, facing west.



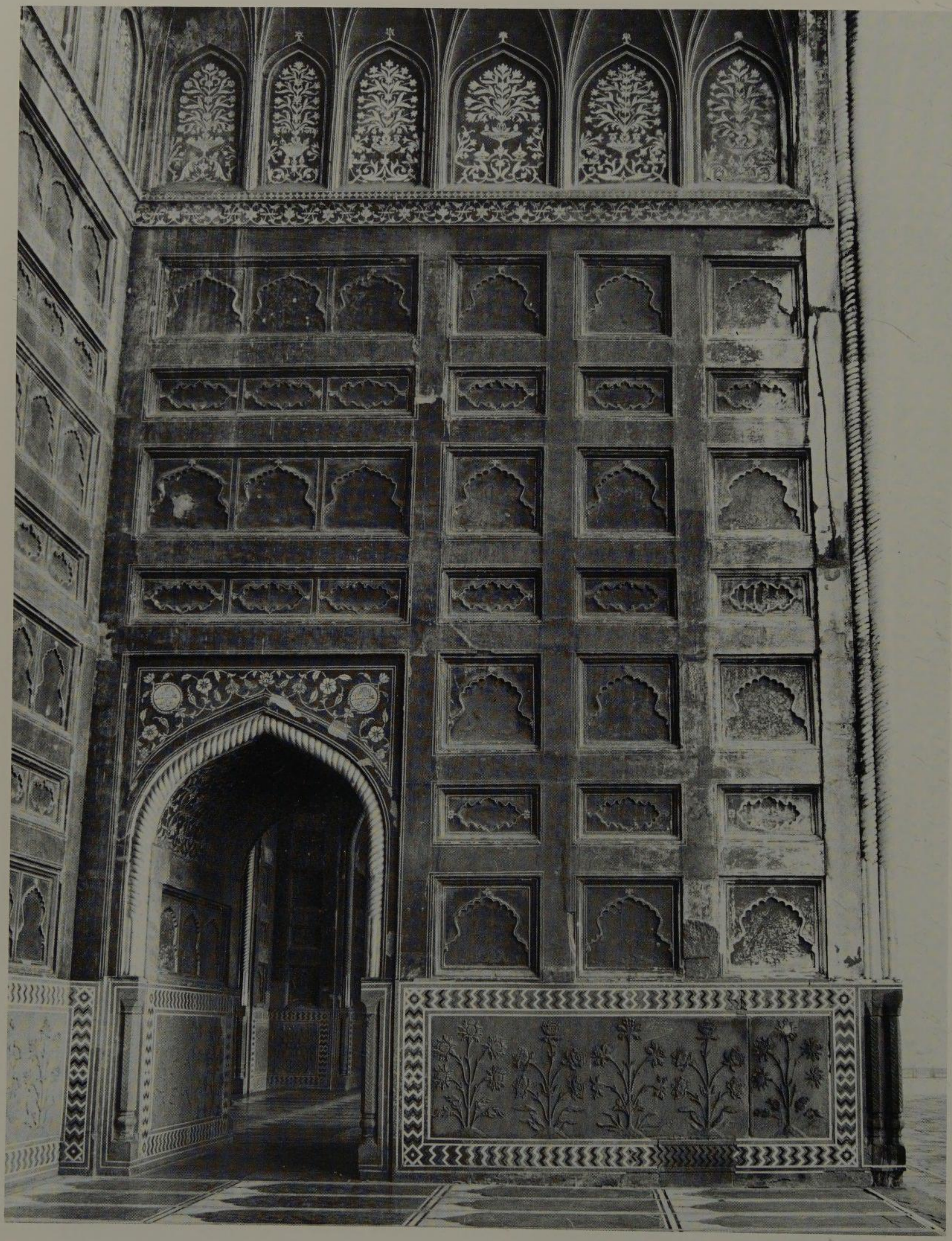
51. Central arch of mosque.



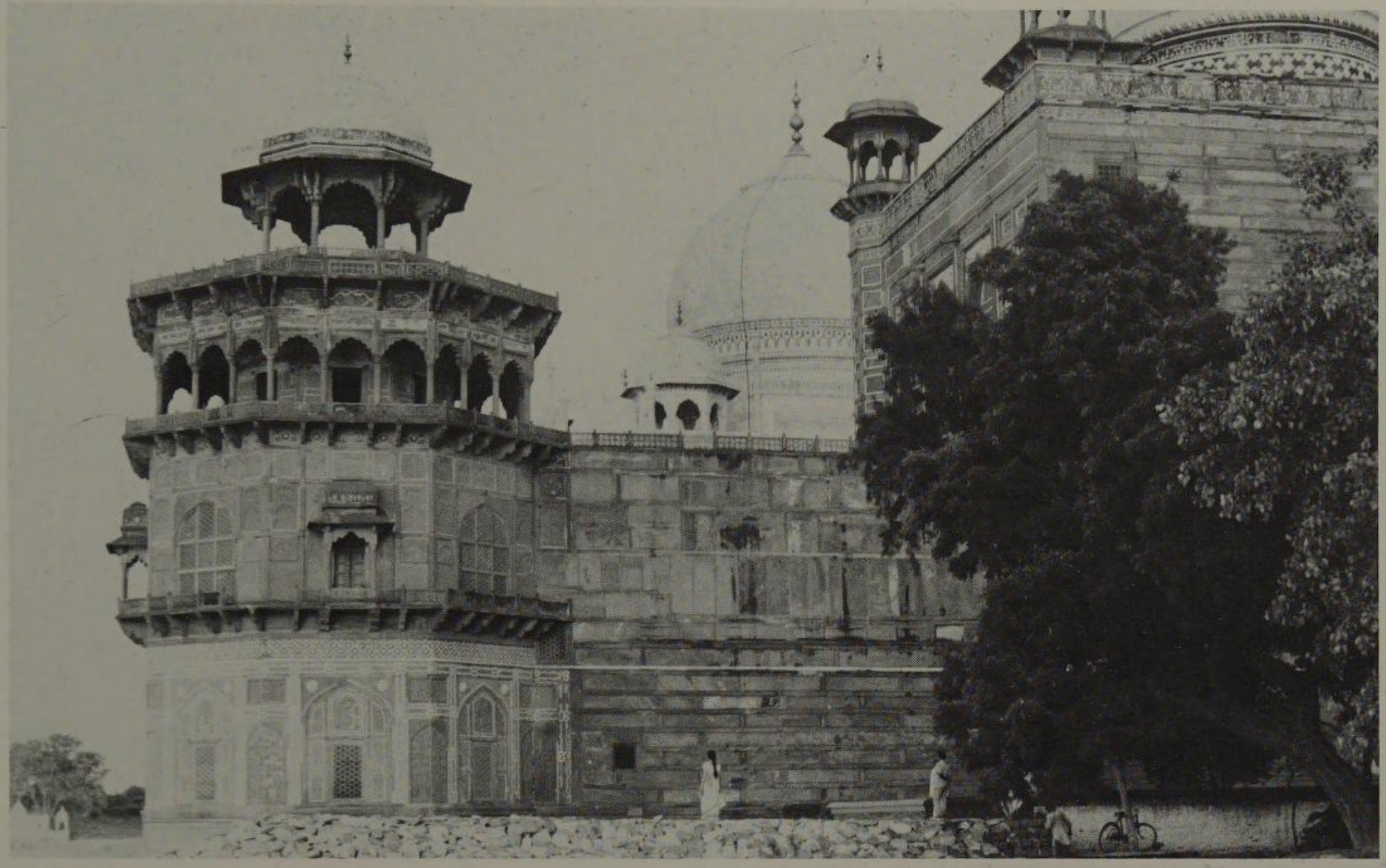
52. Ceiling of central dome of mosque.



53. Mihrab wall of mosque.



54. North wall of central recess of mosque.

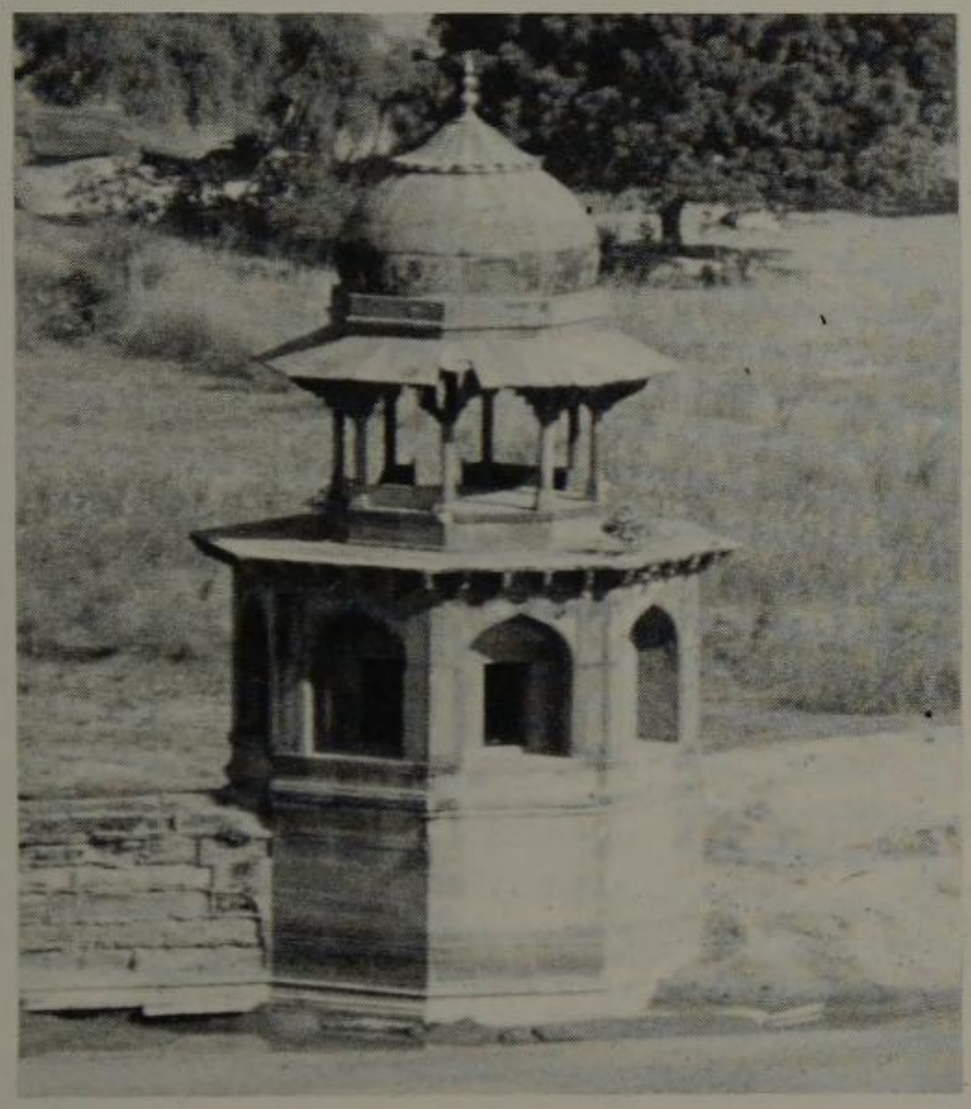


55. View of northwest plinth tower and rear of mosque, facing east.

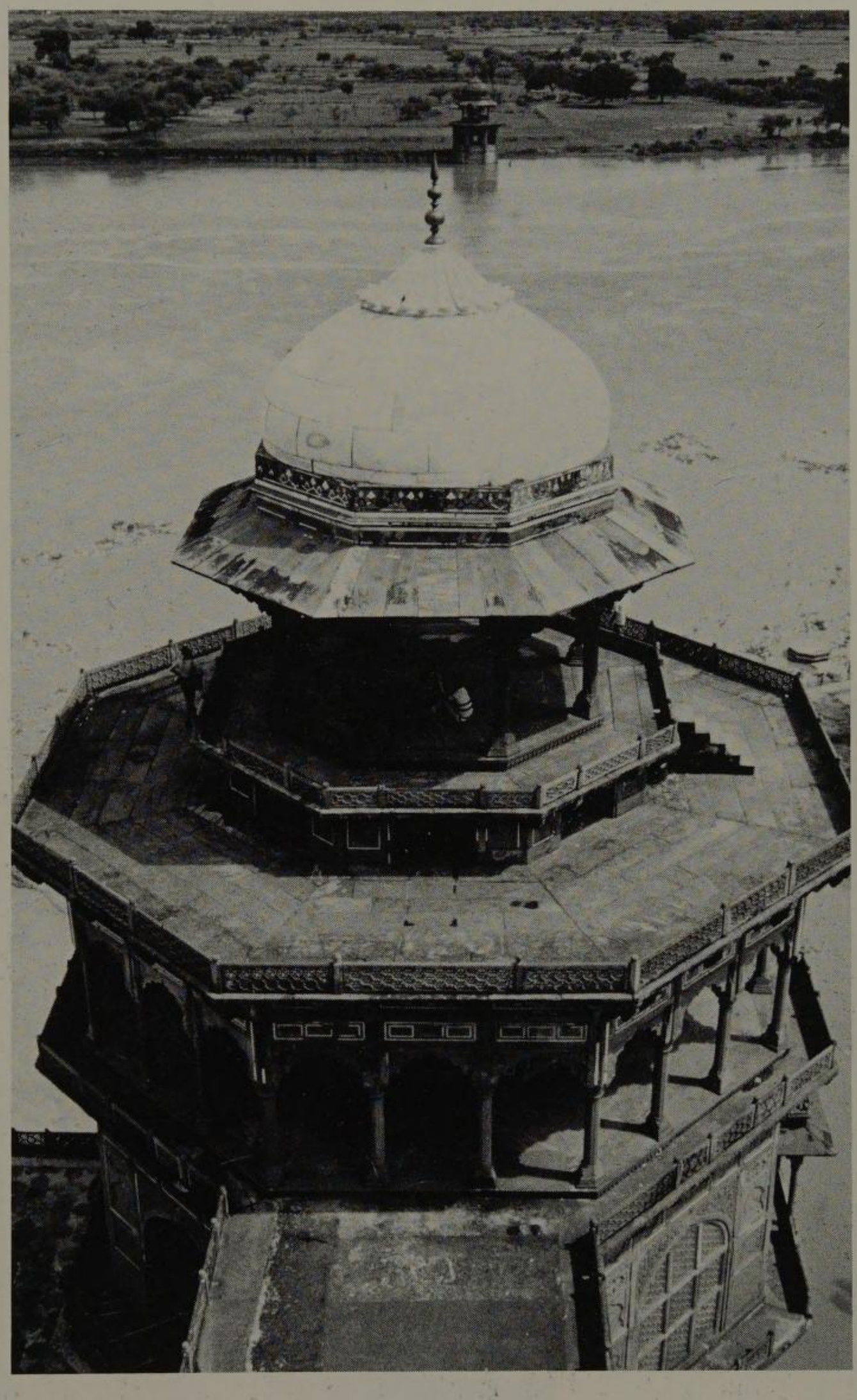


56. Detail of north wall of portico attached to south side of mosque.

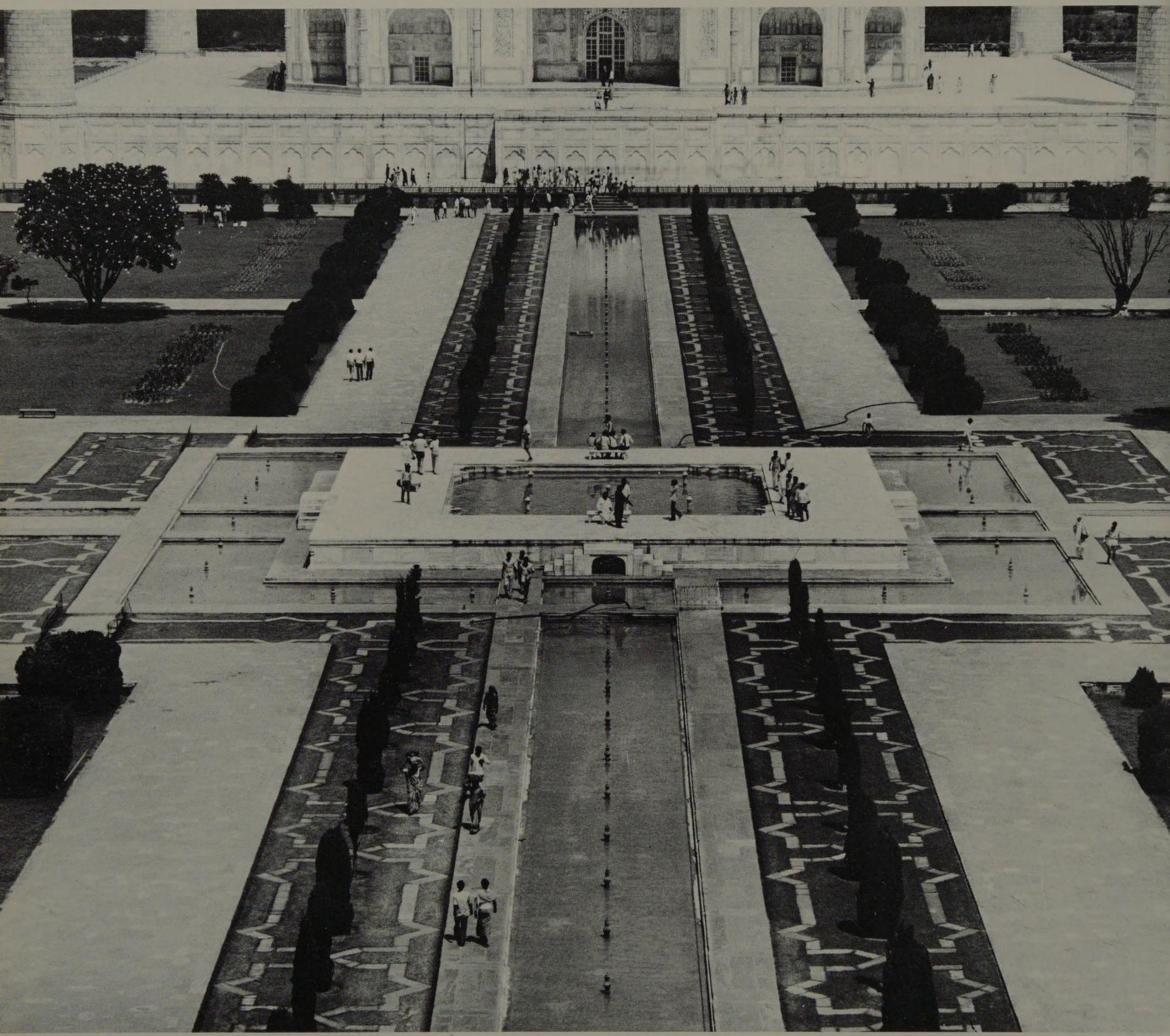
57. Tower at northwest corner of plinth.



58. View of tower across Jumna river.

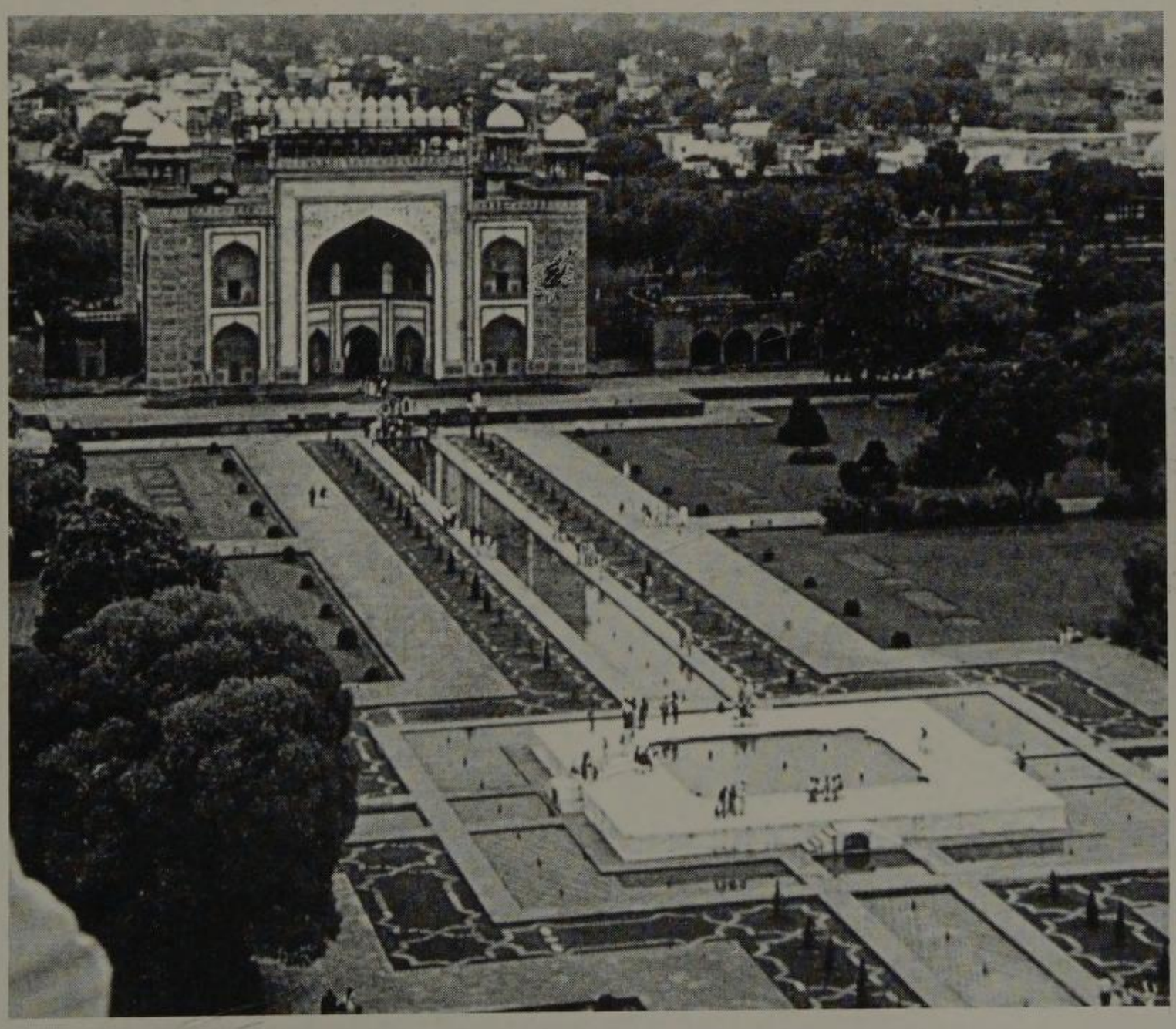


59. Tower at northeast corner of plinth, facing Jumna river to north.

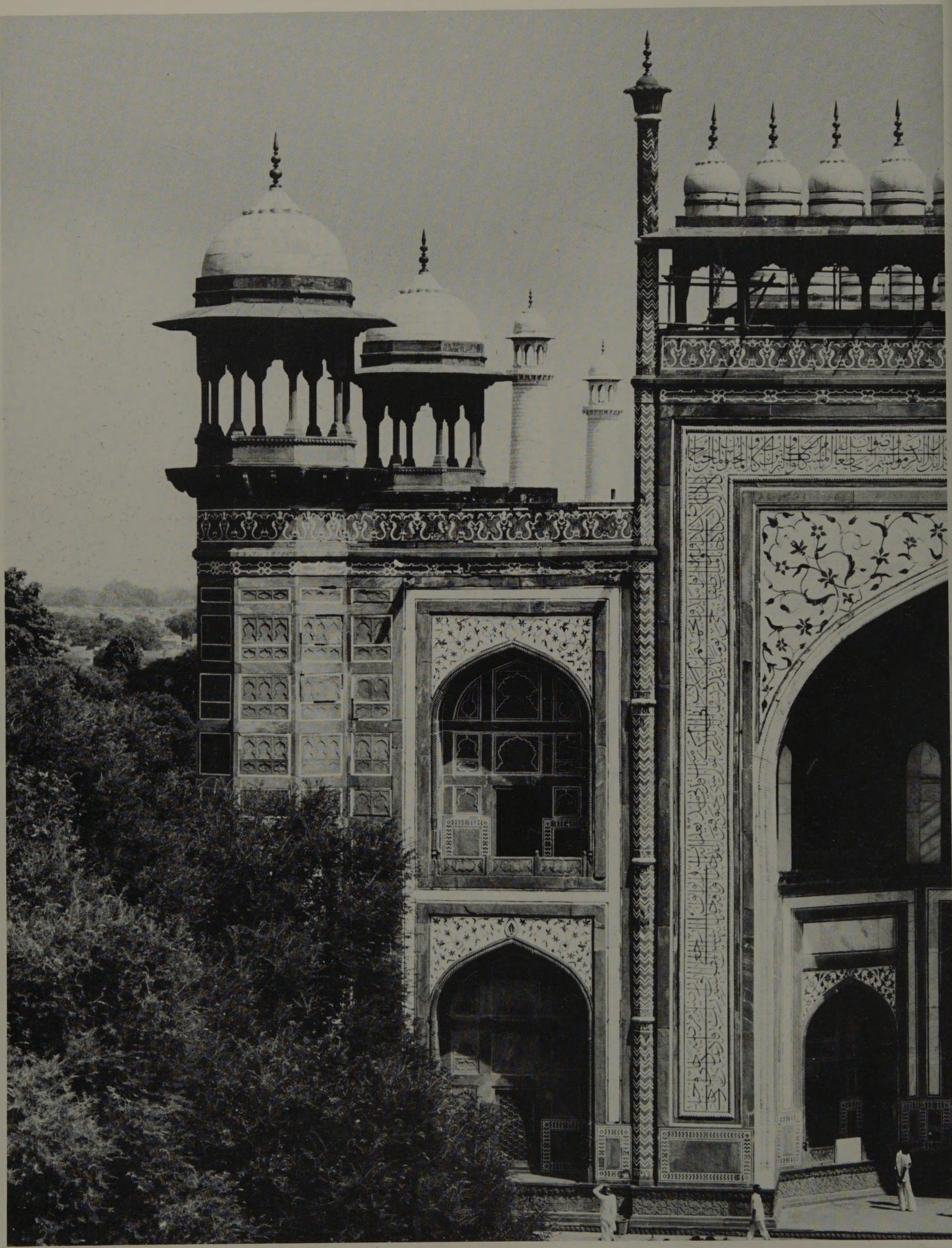


60. View of marble tank in center of garden.

61. West garden pavilion.

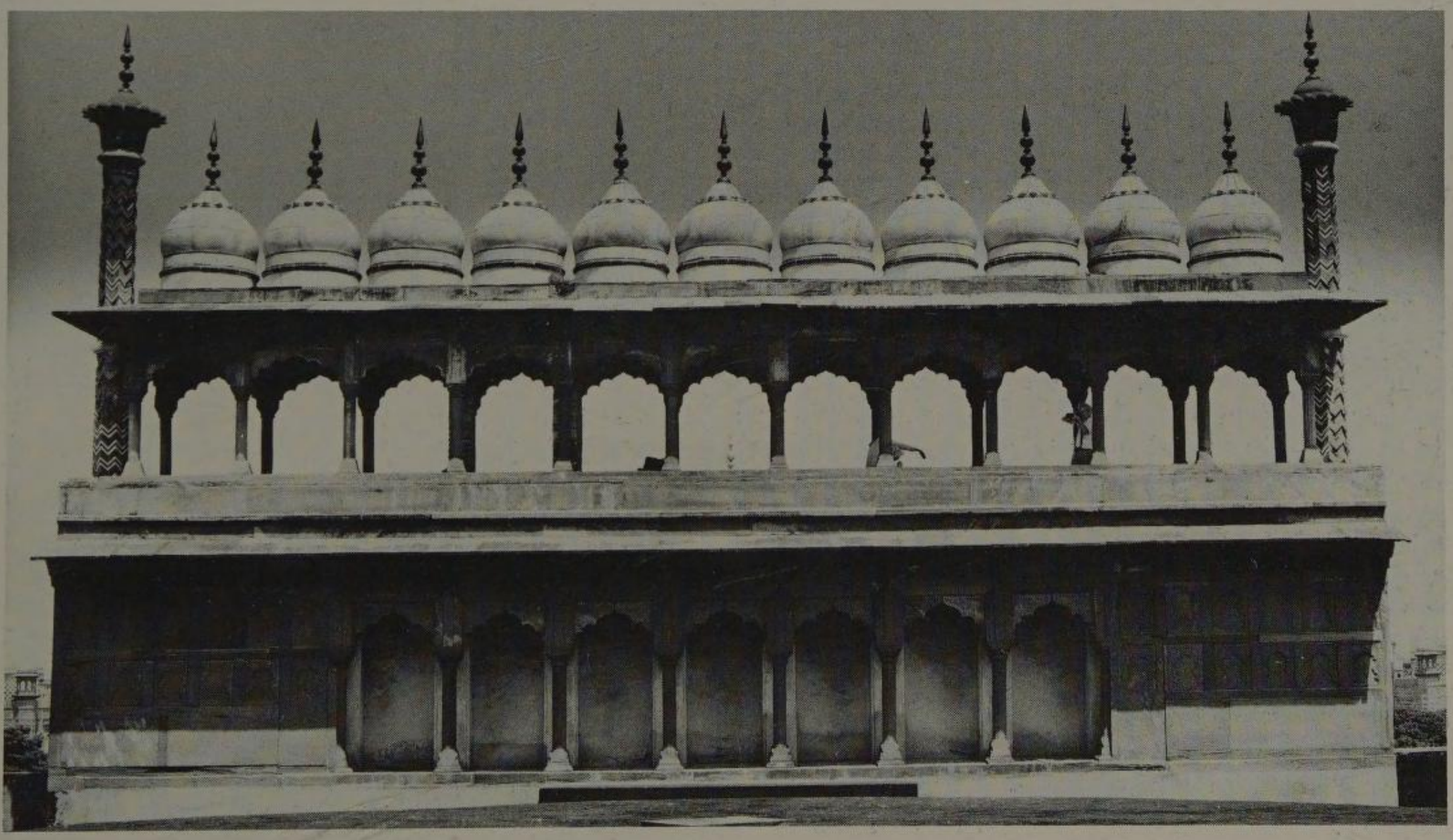


62. View of gateway from minaret, facing southwest.

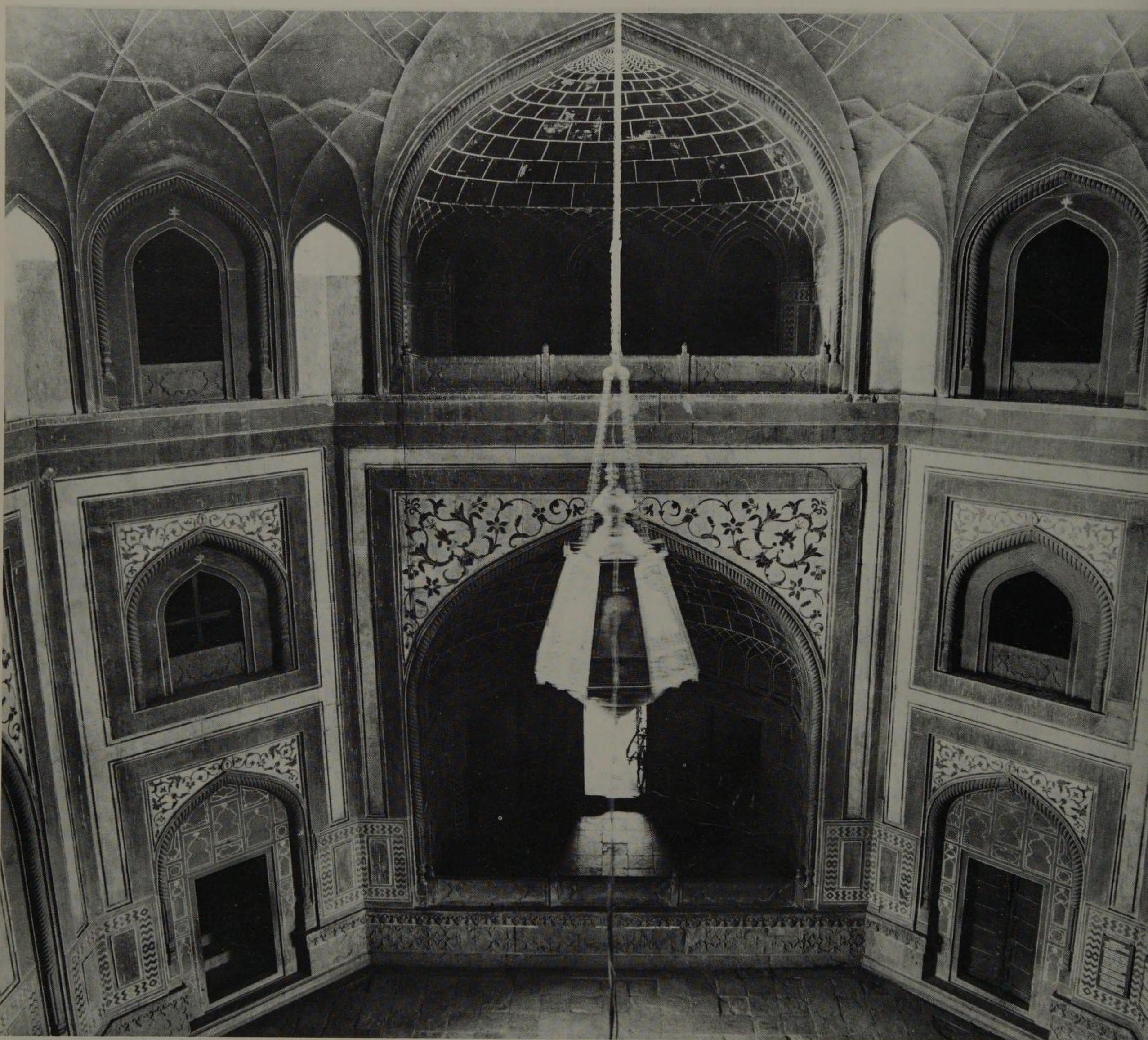


63. Gateway, detail of left side of south facade.

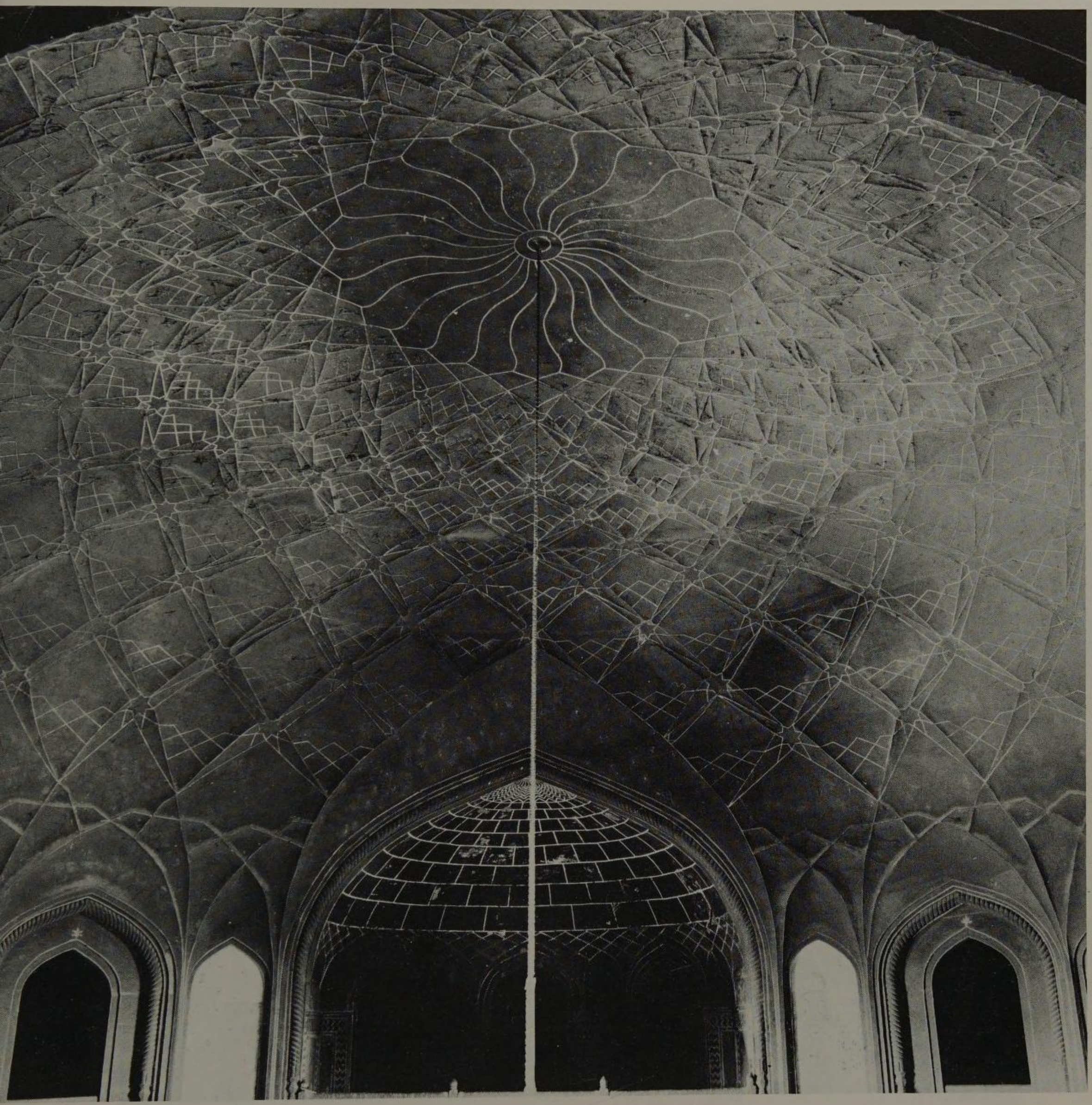
64. View of southeast corner of gateway, facing northwest.



65. Gateway, detail of domed pavilions above north facade.



66. Gateway, interior domed hall.

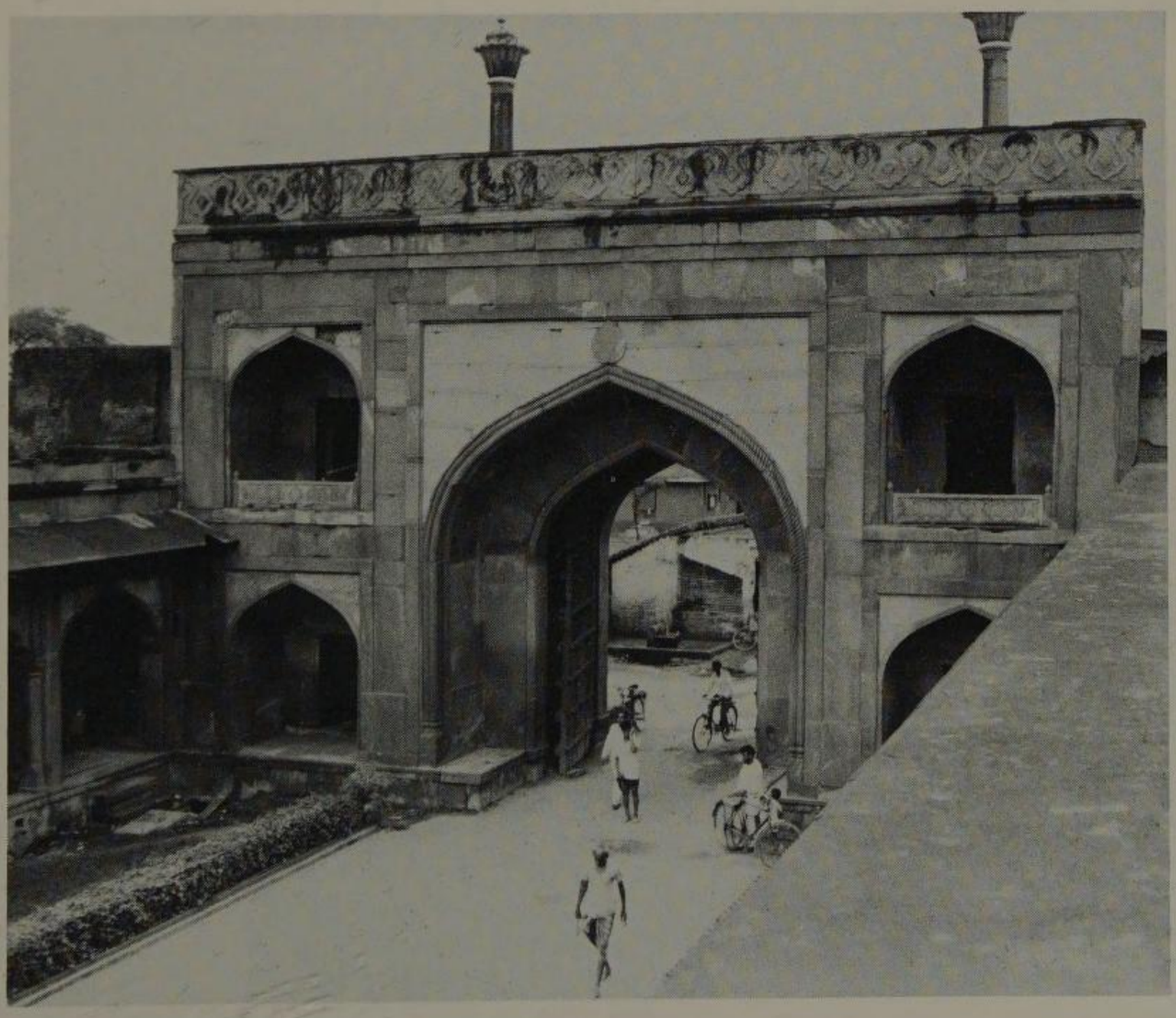


67. Gateway, ceiling of domed hall.

68. Facade of west entrance gateway to forecourt of tomb complex, facing east.

69. Inner facade of west entrance gateway, facing west.

70. East entrance gateway to forecourt of tomb complex, facing east.



71. Inner facade of east entrance.

72. View of south entrance gateway to forecourt of tomb complex, facing southwest.

73. Entrance gateway to now ruined northwest sarai, of the original four situated south of forecourt of tomb complex.

# 16

# THIRTEENTH 'URS

## 16.1 LAHORI

**[II, p. 351-52]** On the night of the 17th Z'il-Qa'da 1053 [27 January 1644], according to the custom of previous years, the 'Urs assembly of that decorator of the camel-litter of the journey to the land of piety, Her late Majesty the Queen, Mumtaz al-Zamani, was held in the heaven-like tomb of that one enshrined in pardon and divine good pleasure (*rizwan*). The Monarch of ocean-like generosity graced that divinely favored assembly with his presence and bestowed an amount of 25,000 rupees among the deserving men; and on the next morning, having again added luster to that purified place through his arrival, he disbursed an additional 25,000 rupees to widows and other deserving women.

## 16.2. SALIH

[Salih omits mention of the Thirteenth 'Urs.]

# 17

# FOURTEENTH 'URS

## 17.1. LAHORI

**[p. 404]** On the night of the 17th of Z'il-Qa'da 1054 [15 January 1645], which is the date of the passing away of Her late Majesty the Queen, the 'Urs assembly was held, according to the established custom, in the sacred mausoleum (*rauza*) of that traveler to the realm of piety. The Monarch whose foundation (*asas*) is Truth graced that delightful place and engaged himself in fragrant prayers. And the exalted Sayyids, lordly learned men, the pious and memorizers of the Qur'an (*huffaz*), who had gathered in that divinely graced assembly (*mahfil*), had their desires fulfilled through the bequest of 25,000 rupees, which is half of the amount stipulated for the occasion, as well as through robes of honor and shawls, and the partaking of varieties of food, sweetmeats and various kinds of perfumes. Next morning, that Monarch of the world returned and distributed the remaining 25,000 rupees to widows and other deserving women.

## 17.2. SALIH

[Salih omits mention of the Fourteenth 'Urs.]

# 18

# DEATH OF SATTI AL-NISA KHANAM, AND BURIAL IN THE FORECOURT OF THE TOMB

[Because of her long years of faithful service, first as the chief Lady-in-Waiting to the late Queen Mumtaz Mahal and subsequently as preceptor and confidante of Princess Jahanara, the Lady Satti Khanam was held in high esteem by Shah Jahan. Sister of the great Persian poet Taliba Amuli, she adopted his two daughters and married the elder to 'Aqil Khan, the eldest son of the calligrapher Amanat Khan.

[When she died, the Emperor provided 10,000 rupees for her burial expenses, as well as 30,000 rupees to construct a tomb for her on the west side of the Taj Mahal complex, adjoining the market square of the forecourt. The tomb, which took one and one-half years to erect, has long been identified as the octagonal tomb in the elevated garden at the southwest corner of the forecourt quadrangle.]

## 18.1. LAHORI

**[II, p. 628]** On the 27th Z'il-Hijja 1056 [2 February 1647], while the throne-decker of sovereignty was busy enjoying hunting in the direction of the Faiz Bakhsh garden [near Lahore], it came to His Majesty's august notice that the chaste and modest lady Satti al-Nisa Khanam had packed up the chattels of existence for the journey to the next world. And that manifestation of divine mercy and the source of unlimited kindness was grieved at hearing about this sad event, and ordered Mulla Ala' al-Mulk, the *Mir Saman*, who was in the city, to grant 10,000 rupees from the imperial treasury for the burial ceremonies (*tajhuz-wa-takfin*) [lit., furnishings and shrouding] of that pardoned one. And after having made the necessary arrangements for this inevitable and unavoidable affair, along with some servants of the court, he was also ordered to accompany Hakim Masih al-Zaman, 'Aqil Khan and Rahmat Khan in carrying [the dead body of] that one hidden behind the veil of non-existence to her first stage (*manzil-i-nakhustin*) [on the journey to the Hereafter].

**[p. 629]** And having been given a temporary burial, after one and a fraction of a year, her body was taken to the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad and buried in the tomb, completed at the cost of 30,000 rupees from the august establishment, to the west of the Illuminated Tomb of Her late Majesty the Queen, adjoining the square (*chauk*) of the forecourt (*jilau-khana*) of the said mausoleum. And a village with an income of 3,000 rupees was granted for the monthly stipend of the keeper and the expenses incurred in upkeep for the tomb.

The said Lady was from Mazandaran and the sister of Taliba Amuli [Abu'l-Talib Amuli], who was the unique of the age in rhetoric, composition and poetic eloquence, and who had been elevated to the position of poet-laureate in the reign of His late Majesty Jannat Makani [Jahangir]. When her husband Nasira, brother of Hakim Rukna Kashi, died in India, with the guidance of wakeful fortune, she enrolled herself [lit., threaded herself with the pearl-string] among the servants of the holy seraglio. And she surpassed all of the former attendants in the court of propinquity to that occupier of the chief seat of the highest paradise, by her skill, eloquence,

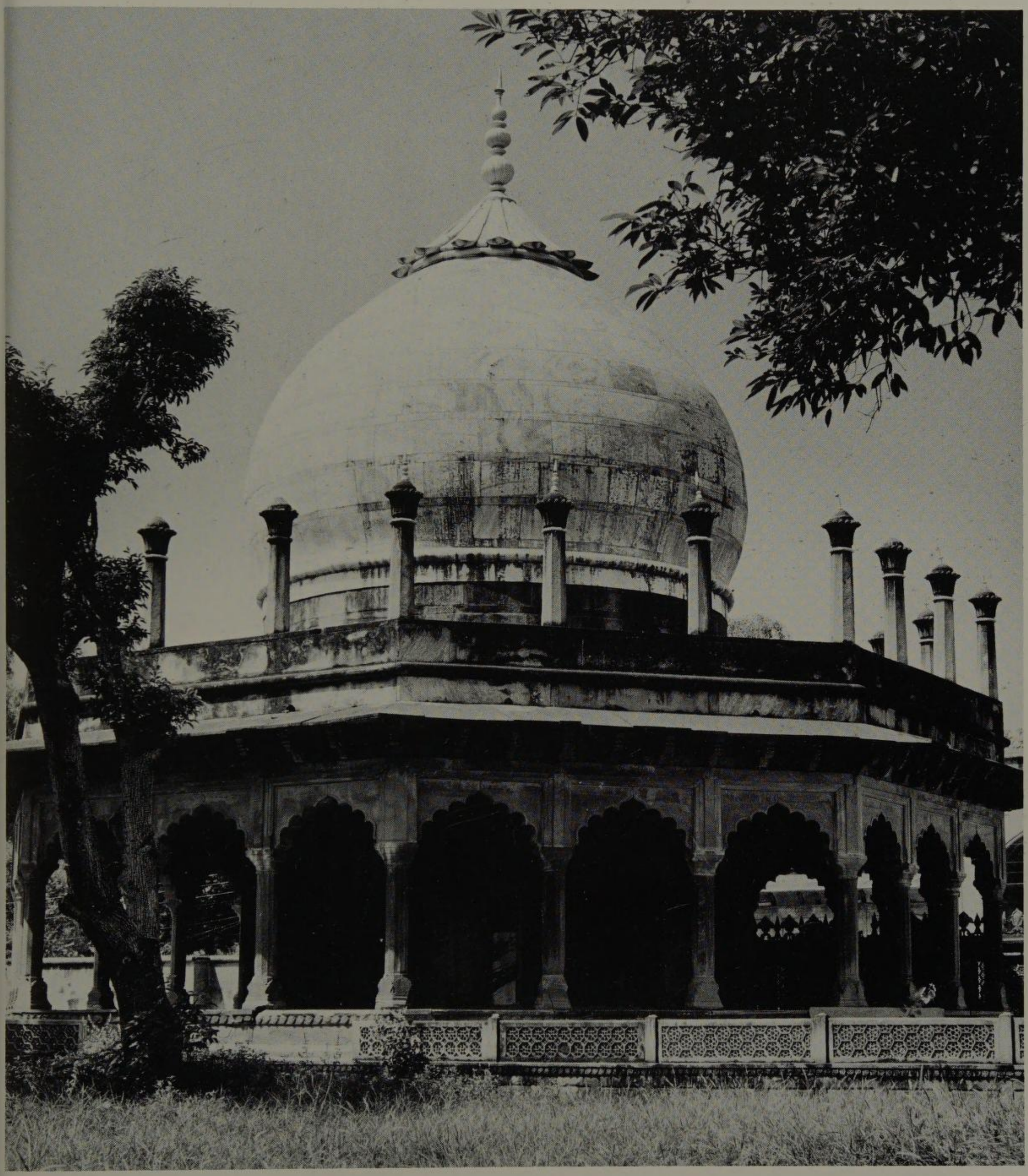
acquaintance with knowledge of the duties of service and rules of housekeeping. And since she was conversant with the science of Qur'anic recitation and recited very well the word of God, and had also read the requisite Persian books of prose and verse, that learner of the divine school, that chief among the chosen ones, leader of the veiled ones of modesty, that light of the eye of the caliphate, and that flower of the garden of sovereignty, Begam Sahib [Jahanara], became her pupil; and within a short time, she acquired knowledge of reading the Holy book, as well as Persian books.

And after Her late Majesty the Queen took to the journey of the land of piety, since the sincerity of her devotion had become as obvious as day, the monarch of the world entrusted to her the superintendence of the sacred female apartments. And since she had no issue, after the death of Taliba, she took as her children **[p. 630]** his two daughters, and gave the elder one in wedlock to 'Aqil Khan [son of the calligrapher Amanat Khan], and the younger one to Hakim Ziya al-Din, entitled Rahmat Khan, who is the son of Hakim Qutba, another brother of Hakim Rukna, whom on account of blood relationship, the said Khanam had summoned from Iran, with the permission of His Exalted Majesty.

Unfortunately, the younger daughter, whom the Khanam loved most, had died on Sunday, the 13th of Z'il-Hijja 1056 [19 January 1647], of an illness contracted during childbirth. Although the Khanam was endowed with prudence and understanding, due to excessive affection, she gave up the thread of patience and confined herself in mourning and grief in the mansion she owned outside the fort of the Abode of the Kingdom, Lahore, until she herself died eleven days later [24 Zi'l-Hijja 1056/30 January 1647].

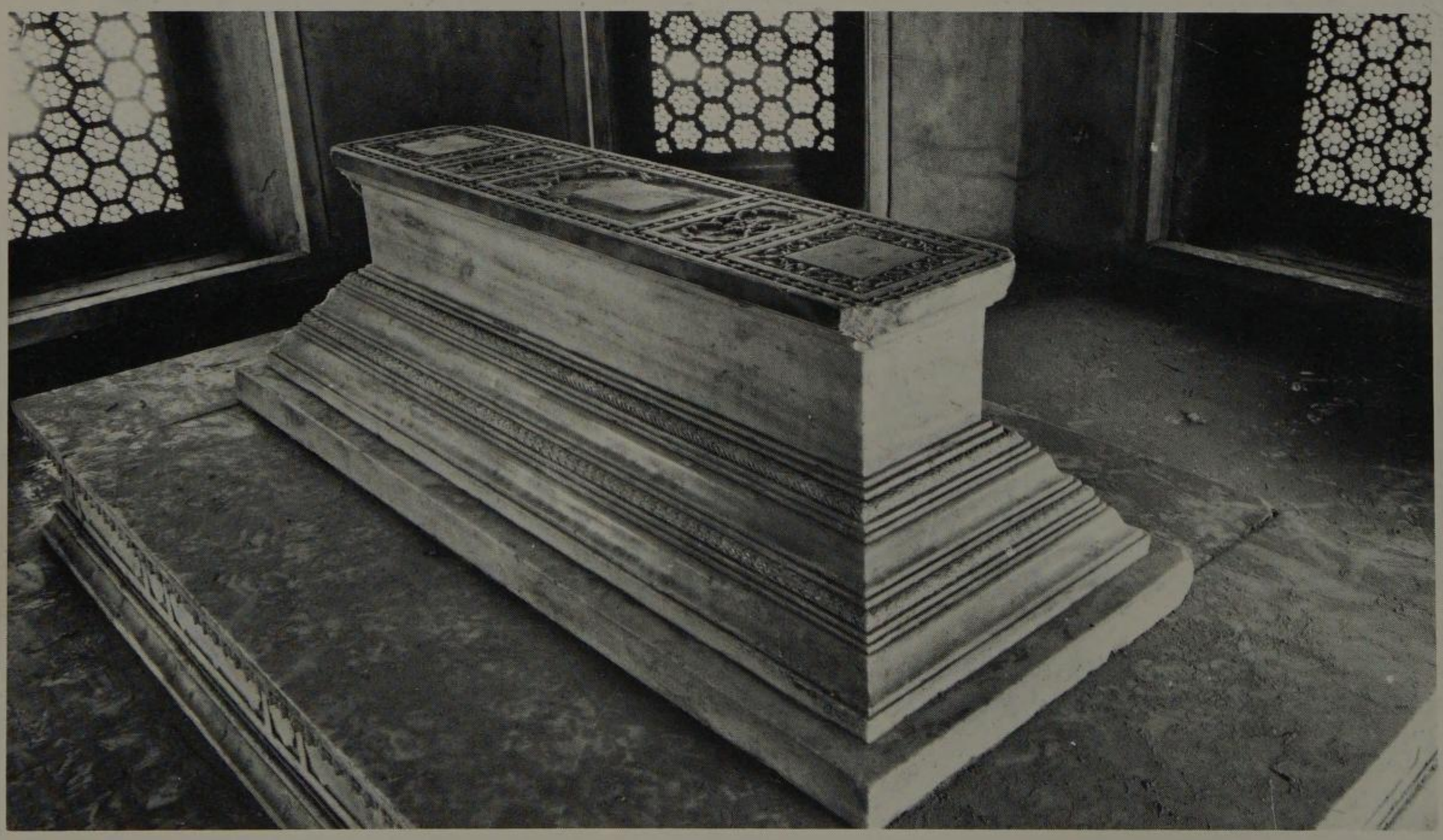
## 18.2. SALIH

**[II, p. 426]** On the 27th of Zi'l-Hijja 1055 [2 February 1647], it came to the august notice that the best of women Satti Khanam had attained the mercy of God. Having expressed sorrow, His Majesty ordered Ala' al-Mulk, the *Mir Saman*, that he should grant 10,000 rupees from the imperial treasury for her general preparation and shroud, and that in company with some of the servants of the court, he should return, after having escorted her body to the appointed place [for her temporary burial].

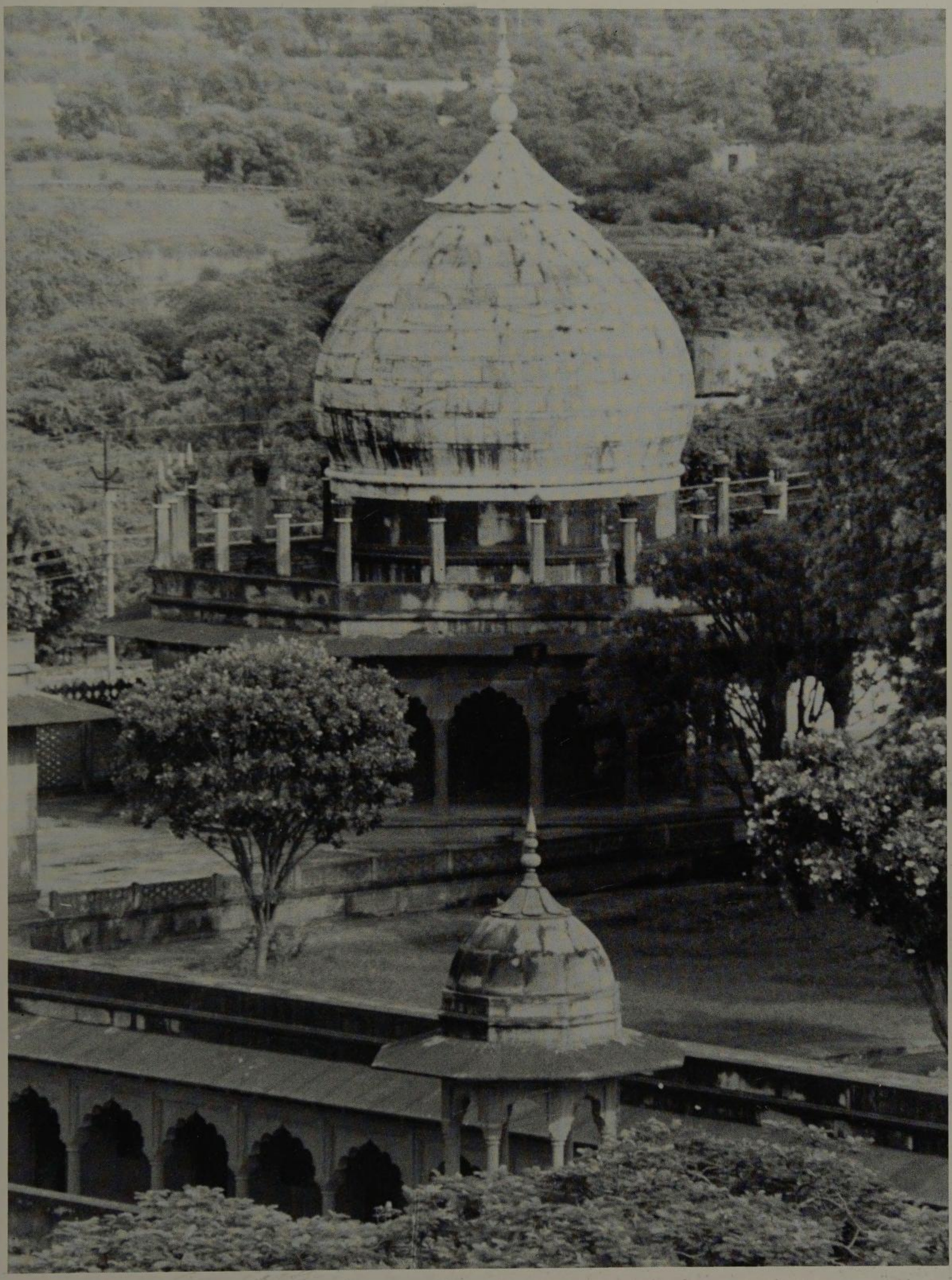


74. Tomb of Satti al-Nisa Khanam, chief Lady-in-Waiting to Mumtaz Mahal, inside garden at southwest corner of forecourt of tomb complex; constructed 1057-58/1647-48.

75. Detail of east side of tomb of Satti al-Nisa Khanam.

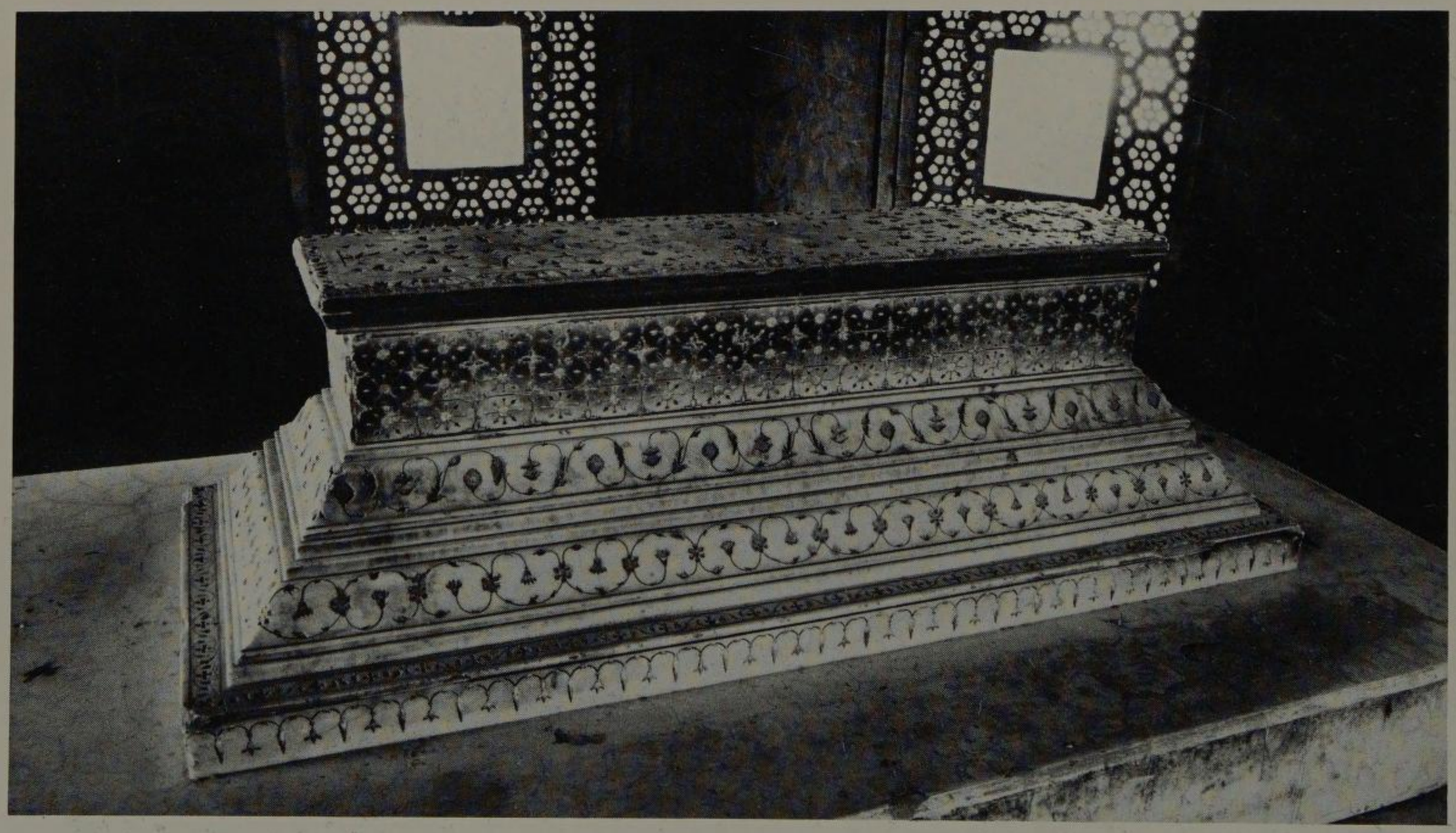


76. Cenotaph of Satti al-Nisa Khanam.

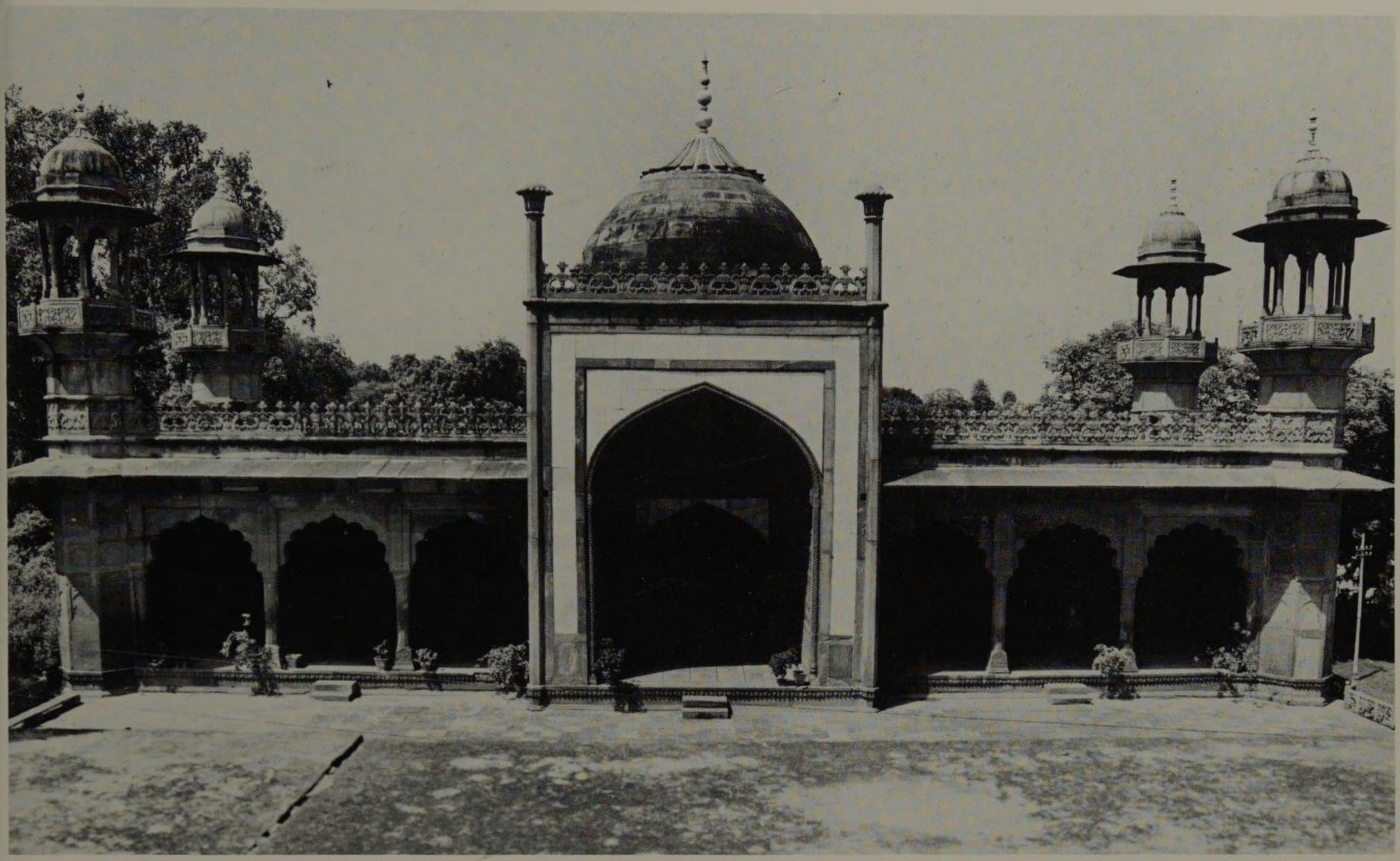


77. View of so-called tomb of Sirhindi Begam, inside garden at southeast corner of forecourt of tomb complex; date of construction unknown.

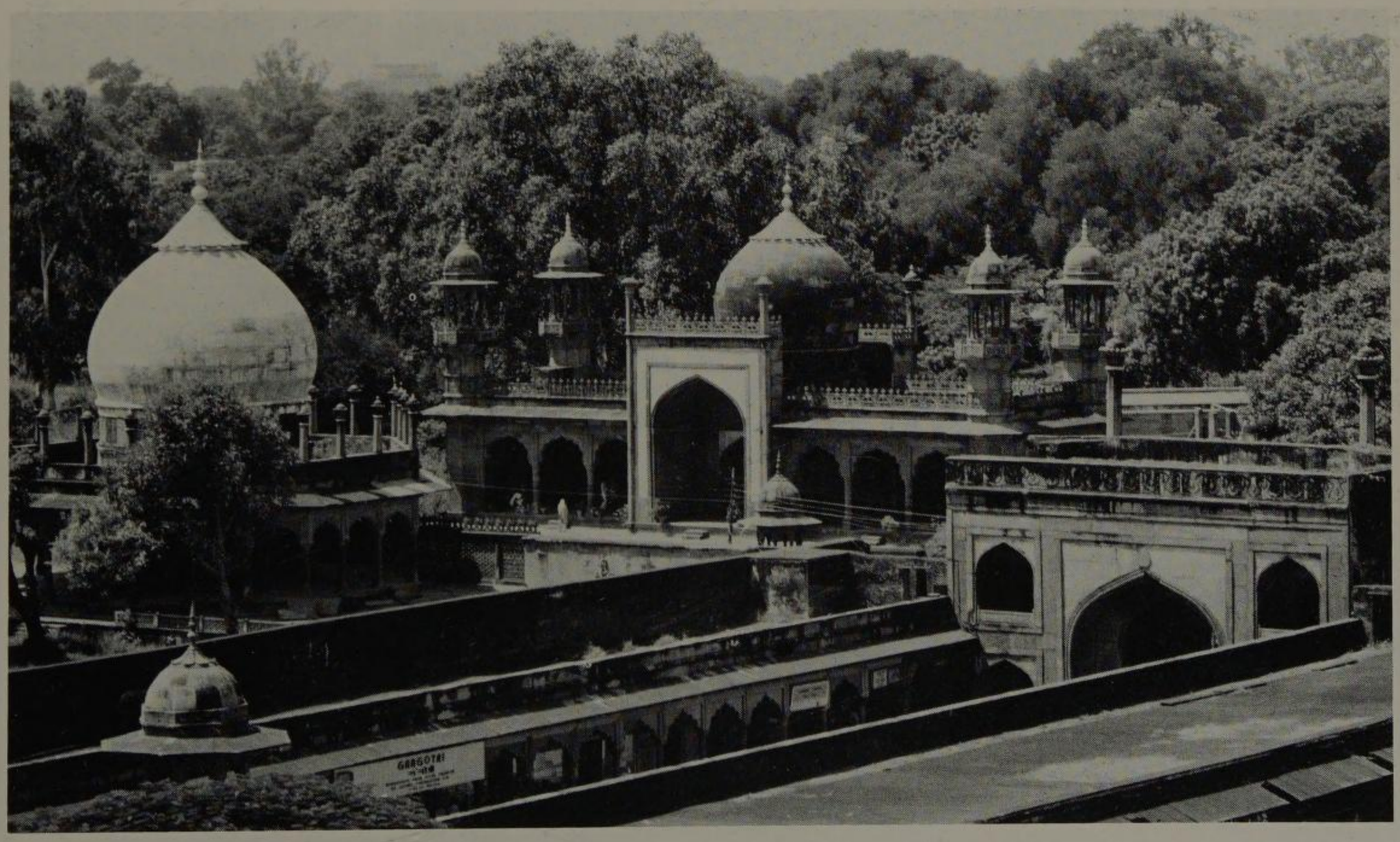
78. Portico attached to tomb of Sirhindi Begam.



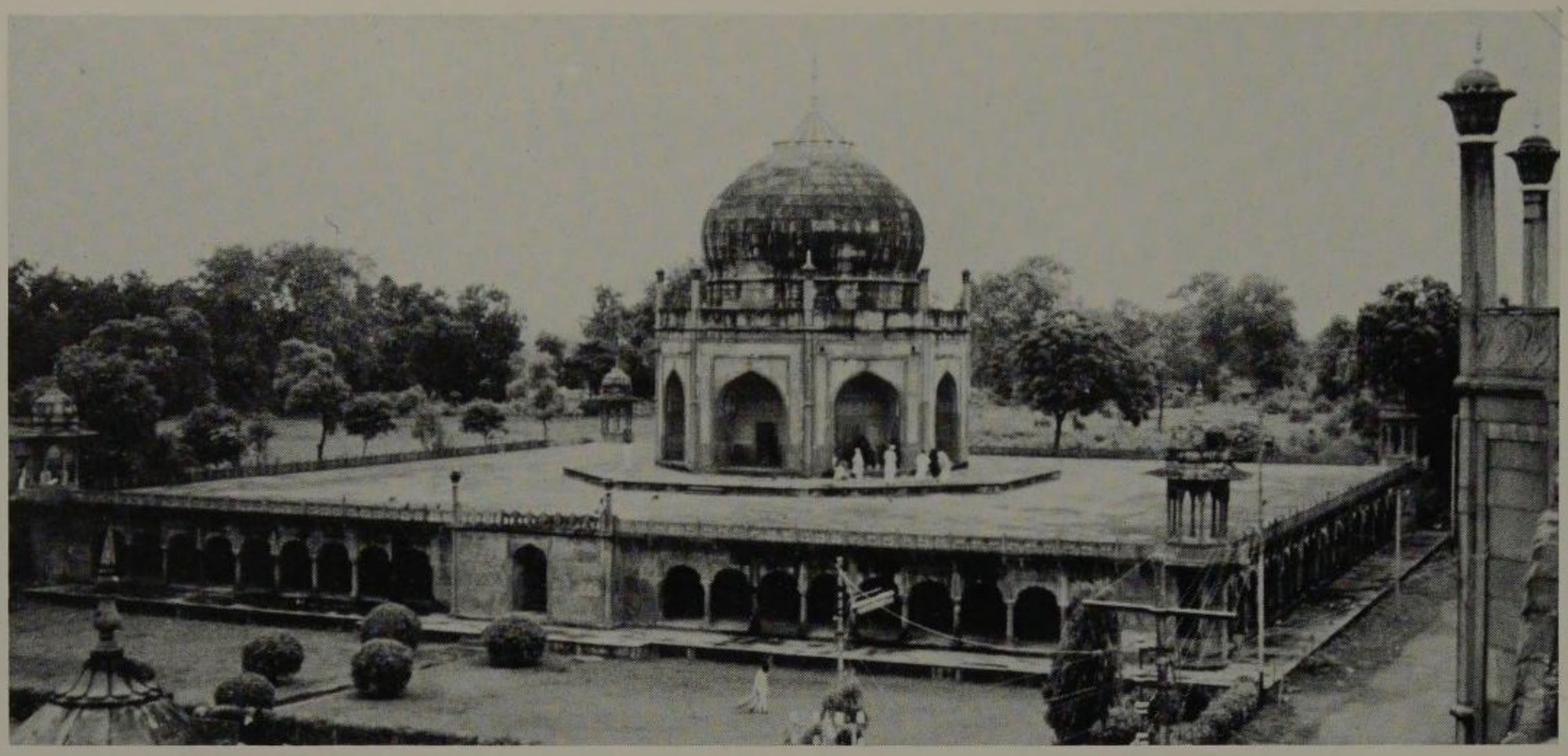
79. Cenotaph inside tomb of Sirhindi Begam.



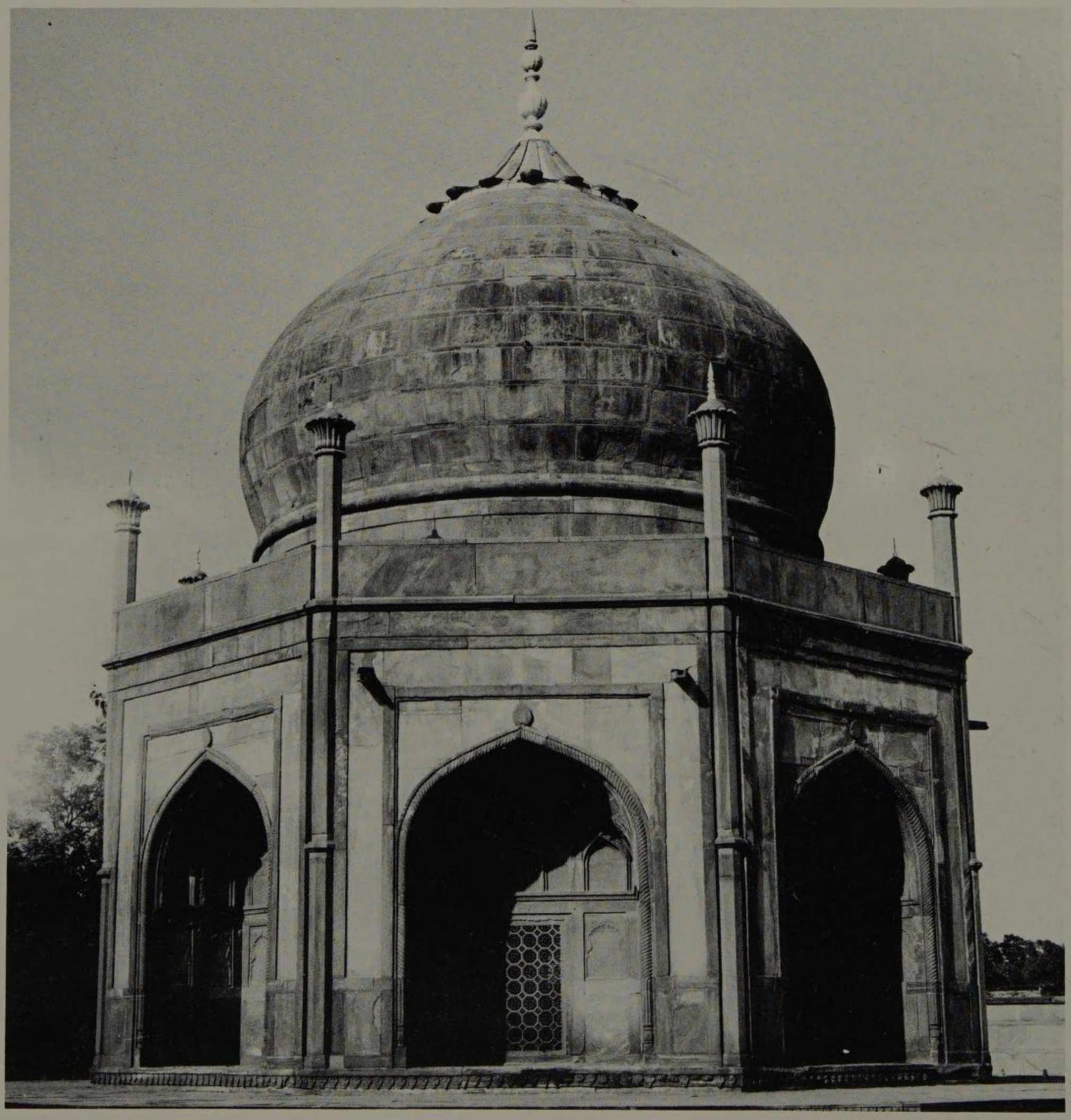
80. So-called Mosque of Fatehpuri Begam outside tomb complex, directly west of tomb of Satti al-Nisa Khanam; date of construction unknown.



81. View of tomb of Satti al-Nisa Khanam and mosque of Fatehpuri Begam.



82. View of so-called tomb of Maids of Honor, outside tomb complex, directly west of servants' quadrangle at northwest corner of forecourt; date of construction unknown.



83. Detail of tomb of Maids of Honor.

# 19

# GRANT OF FUNDS FROM THE TOMB TREASURY TO ABU SA'ID, GRANDSON OF I'TIMAD AL-DAULA

[From this reference and the one following, it is clear that the income from the endowment for the Illumined Tomb was more than adequate to meet the stipulated expenses. Accordingly, part of the excess was apparently disposed of by Shah Jahan in the form of very specific bequests to high ranking persons--the grandson of I'timad al-Daula, the distinguished Prime Minister of Jahangir, and the Emperor's youngest son Prince Murad Bakhsh.]

19.1. WARIS

**[fol. 403b]** [And on the 2nd of Rabi' II 1059/15 April 1649, on the occasion of the Emperor's fifty-ninth lunar birthday weighing,] Abu Sa'id, grandson of I'timad al-Daula, who used to receive 1,000 rupees a year from the treasury (*khazina*) of the Illuminated Tomb (*rauza-i-munavvara*) was favored with the *faujdari* of Ajmer on transfer of Shah 'Ali, at the request of the Lady of the Age, Begam Sahib [Jahanara]; and having been exalted with the grant of a robe of honor and a *mansab* of 2,000 *zat* and 800 *sawar*, he was permitted to depart.

19.2. SALIH

**[III, p. 93]** [On the 2nd of Rabi' II 1059/15 April 1649, on the occasion of the Emperor's fifty-ninth lunar birthday weighing,] Abu Sa'id, grandson of I'timad al-Daula, who used to receive 1,000 rupees as annual stipend (*saliyana*) from the Illumined Tomb, having had his cheek of good fortune brightened with [the grant of] a *mansab* of 2,000 *zat* and 800 *sawar* and the *Faujdari* of Ajmer, on the transfer of Shah 'Ali, at the request of Begam Sahib, now was accorded the honor [lit., had his head raised aloft] of taking his leave.

# 20

# GRANT OF FUNDS FROM TOMB TREASURY TO PRINCE MURAD BAKHSH

## 20.1. WARIS

**[fol. 464a]** [And on 1 Rabi' II 1064/19 February 1654, on the occasion of the Emperor's sixty-fourth lunar birthday weighing in the Shah Mahal of the Shahjahanabad Fort, Prince Murad Bakhsh came to court with his son Izad Bakhsh,] . . . And the King, who is the keeper of the world, distinguished that prince of lofty lineage [Murad Bakhsh] with the grant of a special robe of honor and charge of the governorship of Gujarat, on the transfer of Shayista Khan, who was favored with the governorship of Malwa; and having added 3,000 *zat* to the *mansab* of that fortunate one, and converting 3,000 *sawar* into *do-aspa* and *sih-aspa*, that one of lofty lineage was favored with the *mansab* of 15,000 *zat* and 10,000 *sawar*, *do-aspa* and *sih-aspa*. And besides the 15 crores of *dams* appertaining to his *mansab*, one crore of *dams* was granted to him as a gift (*in'am*), thus bringing the total to 16 crores.

And he was also granted one lakh of rupees from the imperial treasury of the victorious stirrups, in addition to the one lakh of rupees which had been granted from the Malwa treasury at the time of his being summoned to court.

And it was ordered that he should take one lakh of rupees from the treasury of the Illumined Tomb (*rauza-i-munavvara*) of that one encompassed in divine pardon and pleasure, Her late Majesty the Queen, and [a further amount of] two lakhs of rupees from the Ahmadabad treasury after reaching there.

## 20.2. SALIH

**[III, p. 182]** [And on 1 Rabi' II 1064/19 February 1654,] the Prince of lofty origin, Muhammad Murad [Bakhsh], having come with his son Izad Bakhsh, had the good fortune of making his obeisance. At that very time, His Majesty exalted him through bequests of a robe of honor, appointment to the province of Ahmadabad, on the transfer of Shayista Khan, a rank increase of 3,000 *zat* and *sawar*, with the conversion of 5,000 *sawar* into the grades of *do-aspa*, *sih-aspa*, and one crore of *dams* by way of a present.

And he also granted the Prince five lakhs of rupees in cash, as follows: one lakh of rupees from the treasury of the august stirrups; one lakh from the Malwa treasury; one lakh from the treasury of the Illumined Tomb; and two lakhs from the treasury of Ahmadabad after reaching there. And of the total of 16 crores of *dams*, 11 crores were granted in *jagir*, and the remaining five crores as a cash stipend for ten months, to be paid from the Surat treasury.

# 21

# ROYAL VISIT TO THE TOMB DURING AN EXCURSION TO AGRA TO INSPECT THE NEW MARBLE MOSQUE INSIDE THE FORT

[Shah Jahan's brief two-day halt in Agra in December 1654, toward the end of the twenty-eighth regnal year, was his last official visit to the city before the war of succession began in late 1657. He went primarily to inspect the recently completed Moti Masjid, or "Pearl Mosque," inside the Agra Fort, but spent part of a day at the Illumined Tomb--his last documented visit.]

## 21.1. WARIS

**[fol. 476b]** On the 17th of Safar 1065 [27 December 1654], the world-nourishing monarch graced the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad and imparted the city splendor and worth by his most exalted arrival; and a world received bounty through the scattering (*nisar*) of gold. Siyadat Khan, **[fol. 477a]** the custodian of the fort, had the good fortune to kiss the threshold of prosperity. Since the star of the sky of magnificence, Shah Buland Iqbal [Dara Shikoh], had not yet seen the white marble mosque of holy foundation which had been built inside the fort of the Abode of Caliphate, the account of which has been written in detail under the events of the twenty-seventh regnal year, His Majesty now inspected that circumambulation-place of the residents of the celestial world [i.e., the angels], in the company of that prince of high worth and wakeful fortune and also 'Ali Mardan Khan, the *Amir al-Umara*.

After that, having graced with his presence the heavenly atmosphere of the Royal Palace as elevated as the Divine Throne (*daulat khana-i-'Arsh-gira*), His Majesty descended the steps to the river; and having boarded the boat (*kashti*) of good fortune, accompanied by daily-increasing felicity, he visited the heaven-like mausoleum of that one enshrined under canopies of divine pardon, Her late Majesty the Queen. And after offering the Fatiha, he returned to the mansion (*manzil*) of that prince of lofty fortune.

## 21.2. SALIH

**[p. 197]** On the 17th of Safar 1065 [27 December 1654], since Shah Buland Iqbal [Dara Shikoh] had not yet seen the mosque of white marble **[p. 198]** which had been constructed inside the fort, His Majesty first went there with that one of wakeful fortune and 'Ali Mardan Khan. And having descended towards the river by way of the stairs of the Shah Burj, he boarded a boat and went to the Illumined Tomb of Her late Majesty the Queen; and after reciting the Fatiha, he returned to the mansion of that prince of lofty fortune.

# 22

# DEATH OF AGAH KHAN, TRUSTEE OF THE TOMB, AND APPOINTMENT OF MAHRAM KHAN AS NEW TRUSTEE

[The eunuch Agah Khan had long held the post of civil administrator (*faujdar*) of the environs of Akbarabad, which apparently also included responsibility for the security of the Illumined Tomb, which undoubtedly contained furnishings of immense value. The sources do not specify Agah Khan's duties as "Trustee" of the tomb, but he apparently also possessed expertise in architecture, for one reference states that, in 1652, he had supervised the construction of a small royal hunting retreat on the Jumna river to the east of Agra, at a place called Mahal in the vicinity of Samugarh--at a cost of 80,000 rupees.]

## 22.1. WARIS

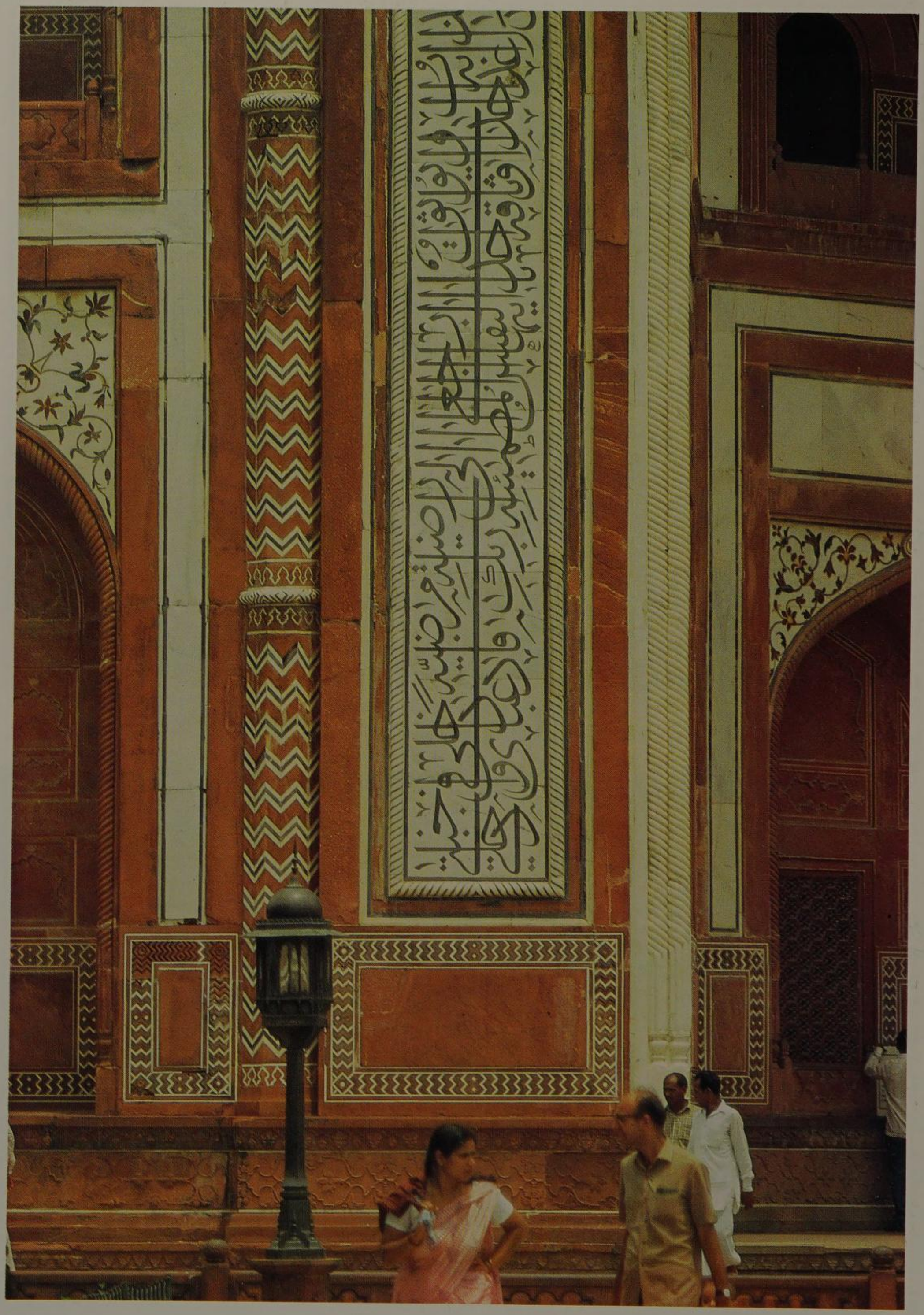
**[fol. 502b]** When it was brought to the august notice [on 9 Rabi' I 1067/26 December 1657] that Agah Khan, who held the post of trusteeship (*khidmat-i-tauliyat*) of the Illumined Tomb (*rauza-i-munavvara*) of Her Majesty the Queen and the *faujdari* of the district of Akbarabad, had rolled up the carpet of life, Girdhar Das Gaur, the custodian of the fort (*qila'dar*) of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad was favored with appointment to the post of the said *faujdari*; and with an increase of 800 *sawar*, he attained the *mansab* of 2,000 *zat* and 2,000 *sawar*. And it was ordered that he should continue to oversee the custody of the fort as usual, and that his brother and his son should proceed with his entourage to attend to the said *faujdari*. And Mahram Khan, who like Agah Khan, was one of the eunuchs (*khwajasara*) of Her late Majesty the Queen, was exalted with the post of the trusteeship of the Illumined Tomb and an increase in his *mansab*.

## 22.2. SALIH

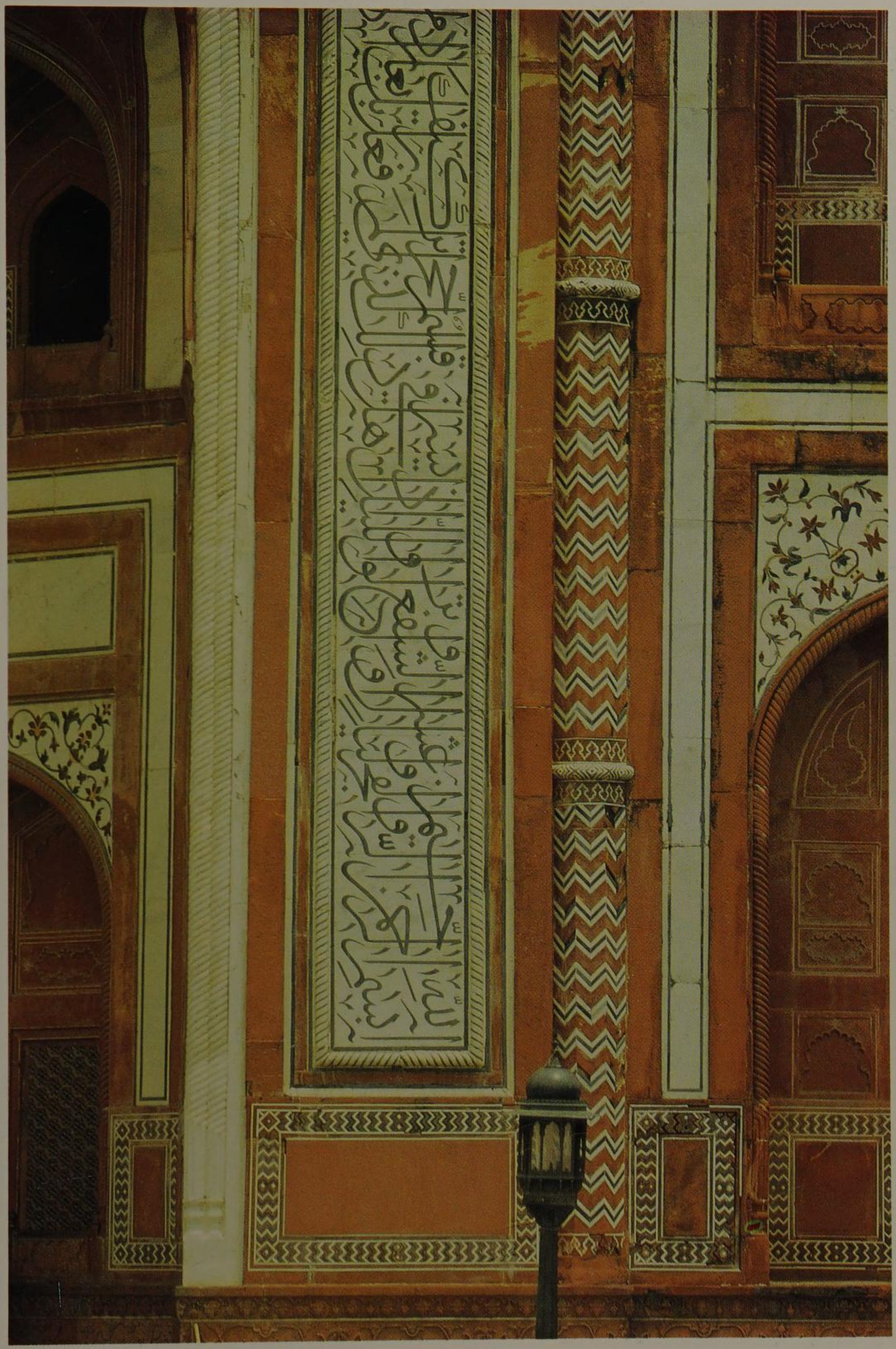
**[p. 237]** [On 9 Rabi' I 1067/26 December 1657,] it came to the august notice that Agah Khan, the trustee (*mutawali*) of the Illumined Tomb and the *faujdar* of the environs of Akbarabad had rolled up the carpet of existence. Having honored Girdhar Gaur with the grant of the *mansab* of 2000 *zat* and 2000 *sawar* and the post of the custodianship of the Akbarabad fort and *faujdari* of its environs, and Mahram Khan with the said trusteeship (*tauliyat*), they were permitted to depart.

XI. Gateway, north facade.

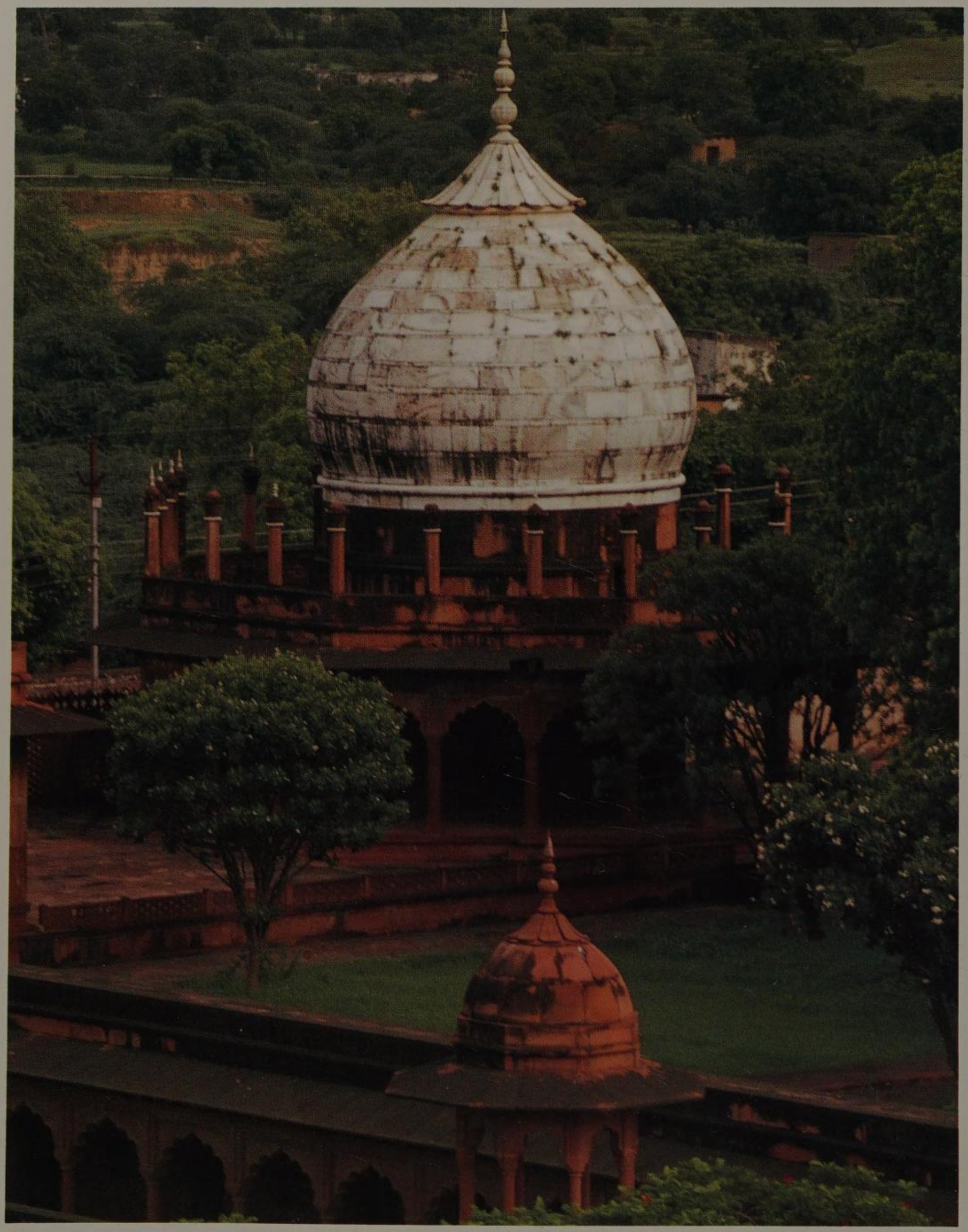
XII. Tank in center of garden.



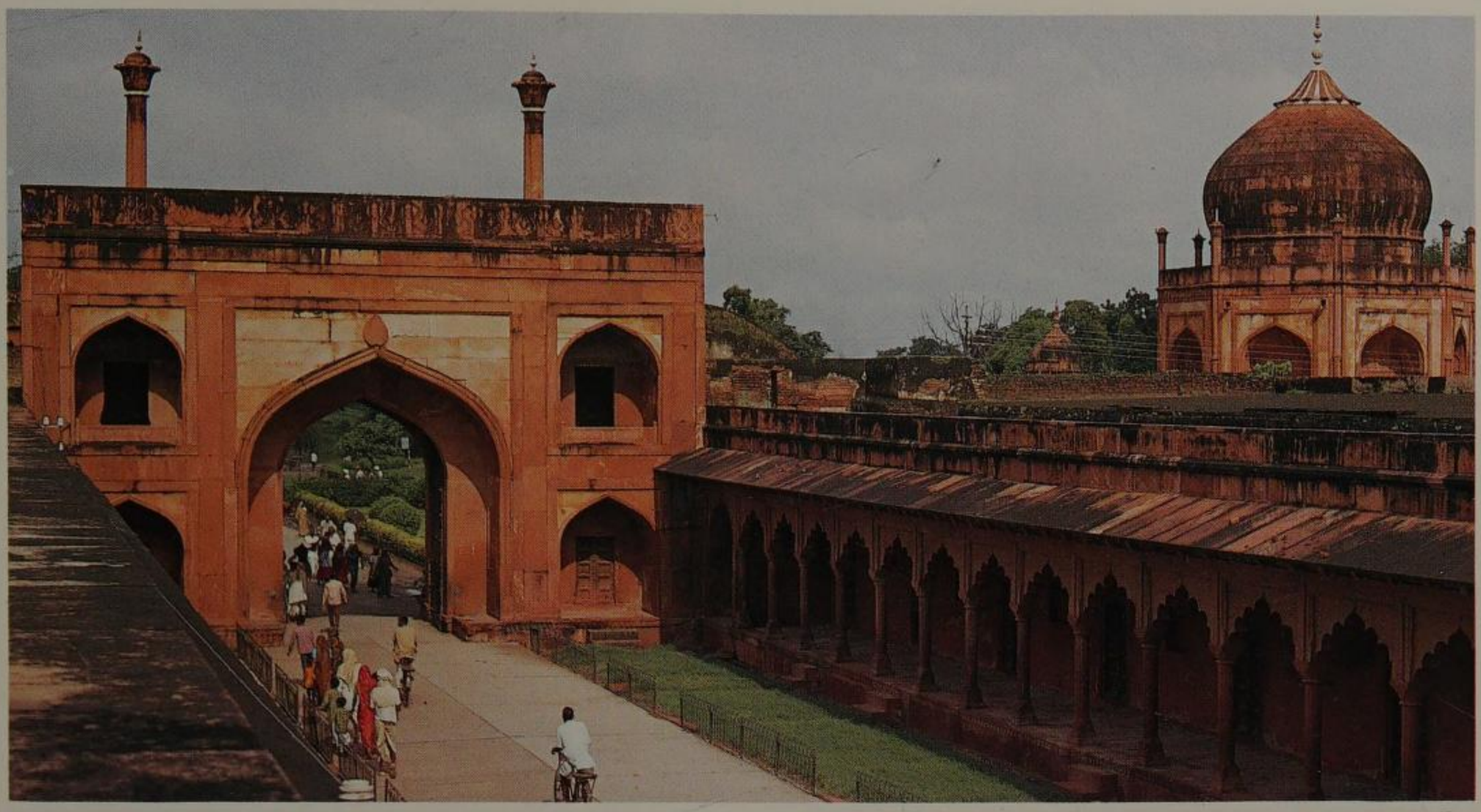
XIII. Gateway, south facade, detail of second half of Sura 89, *al-Fajr*, "The Break of Day."



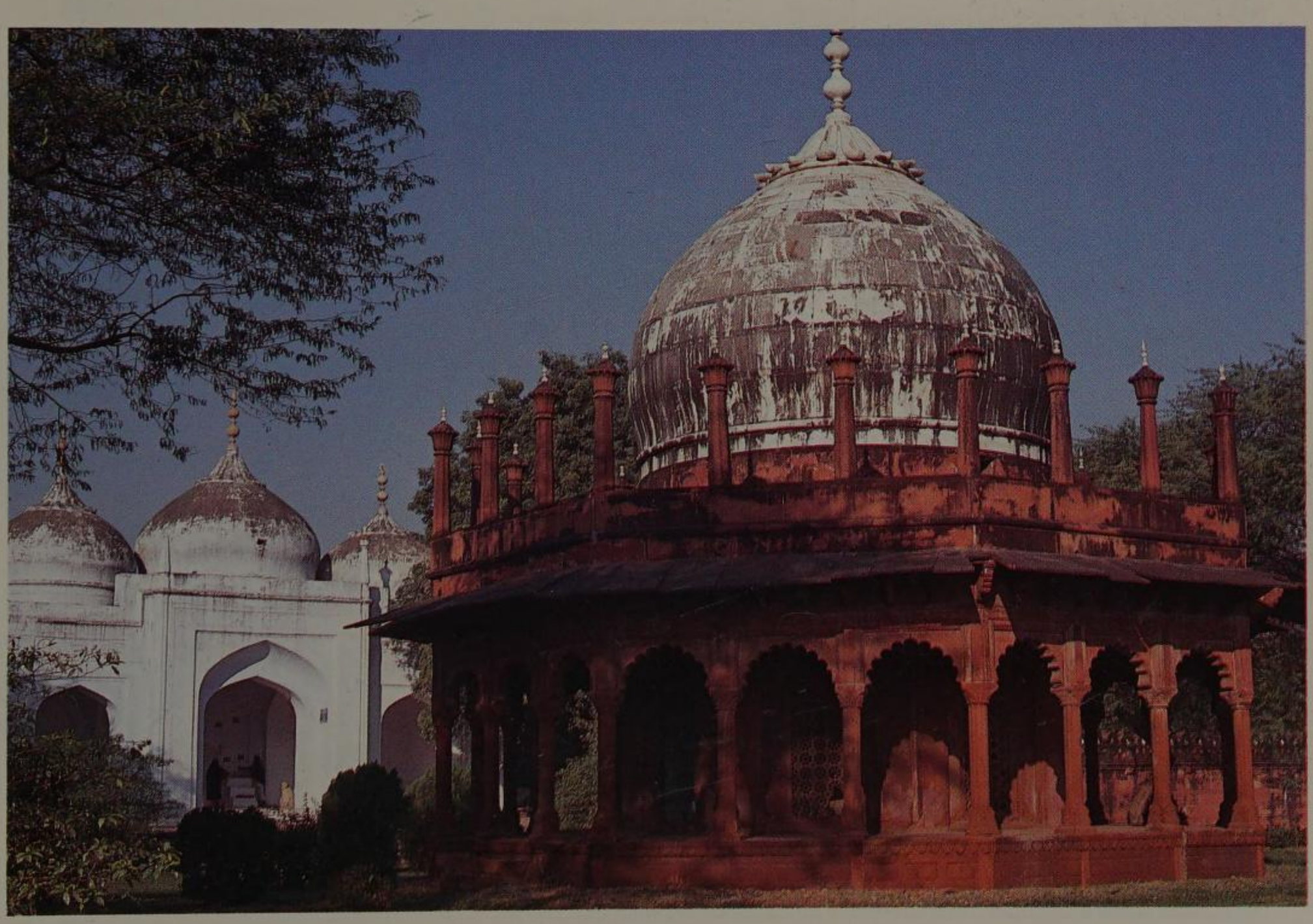
XIV. Gateway, south facade, detail of first half of Sura 89.



XV. So-called tomb of Sirhindi Begam, elevated enclosed garden at southeast corner of forecourt.



XVI. Interior facade of west entrance to forecourt, and row of bazar shops.

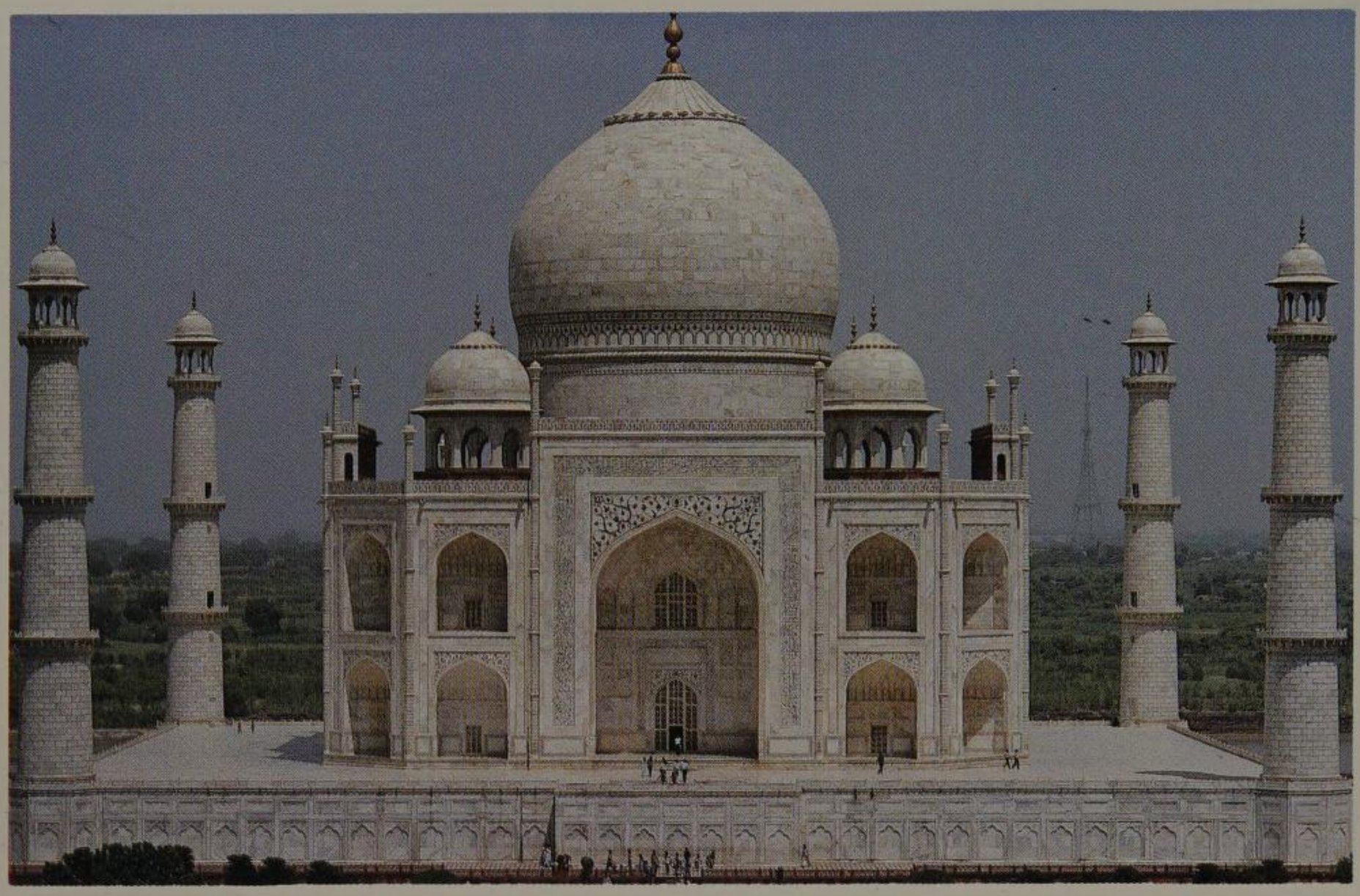


XVII. Unidentified tomb and mosque outside east wall of tomb complex.

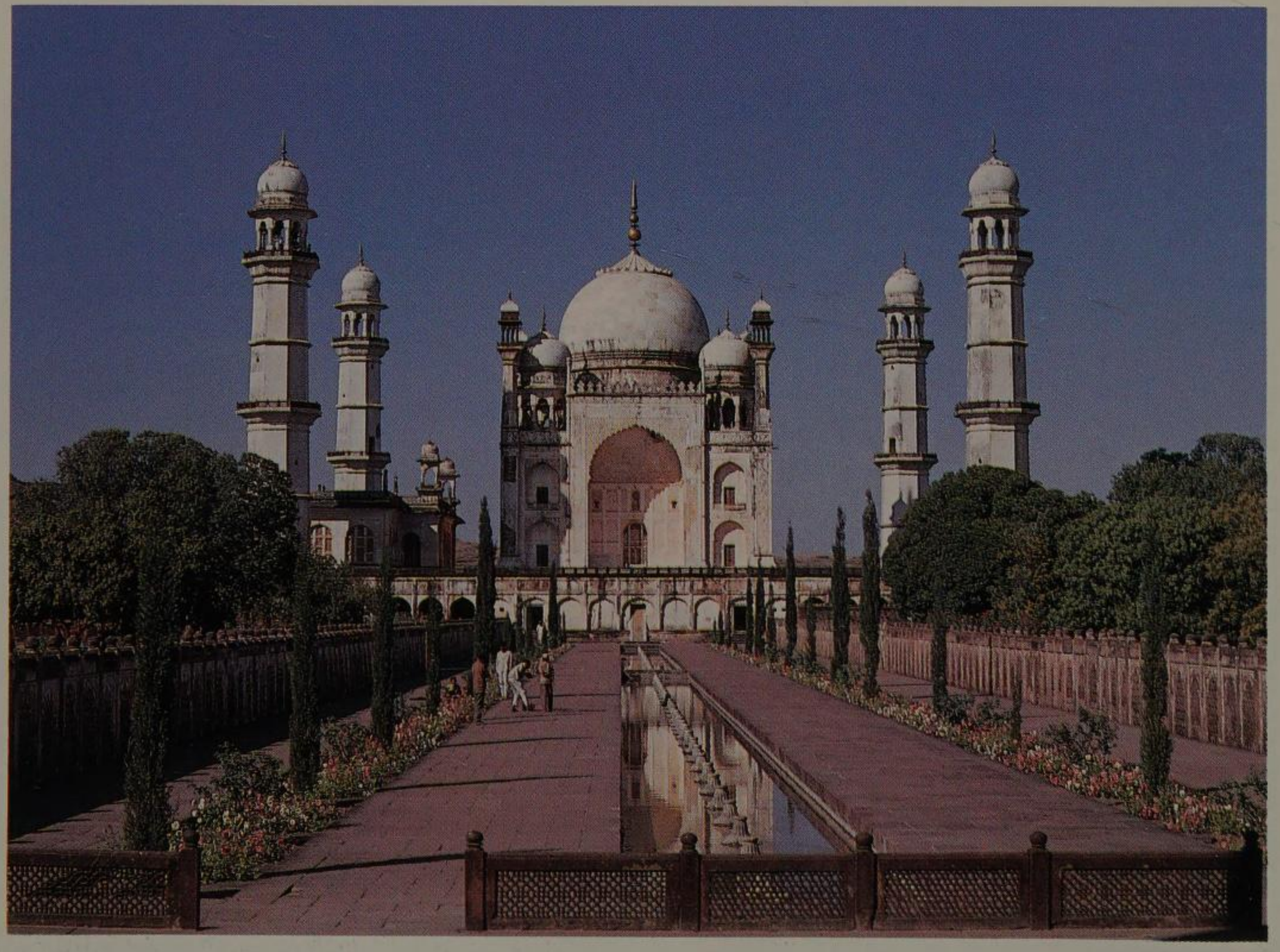
XVIII. Interior of tomb, signature of calligrapher Amanat Khan on south arch, dated 1048/1638.

XIX. Sarai Amanat Khan, near Amritsar, detail of dedication inscription of Amanat Khan, dated 1050/1640-41.

XX. Sarai Amanat Khan, west facade.



XXI. Taj Mahal, south facade of tomb, completed ca. 1046-1048/1636-1638.



XXII. Bibi-ka-Maqbara, tomb of Rabi'a Daurani, wife of Aurangzeb, at Aurangabad, completed 1071/1660-61

# 23

# MENTIONS OF THE COSTS OF THE TOMB AND OTHER CONSTRUCTIONS

[These summaries of expenditures from the royal treasury appear in the histories at the end of the account of the twentieth regnal year, but they include certain costs which extend several years farther into the reign--such as the construction of the Moti Masjid at Agra, which was completed only in the twenty-seventh regnal year.

[It is clear that the greatest outlay of state funds was upon military campaigns, although no precise figures are cited. Next come bequests of various kinds, which total almost ten crores of rupees (95,000,000). The total spent on all architectural projects comes to only two and one-half crores (25,000,000). This figure includes the 50 lakhs (5,000,000) of rupees spent on the Illumined Tomb, which thus represents about 20 percent of the grand total on buildings--not counting Shah Jahan's last great architectural monument, the Jami' Masjid at Delhi, since its foundation had "only recently" been laid at the time of writing. Since solid documentary evidence is lacking for construction procedures and costs under Shah Jahan, the summary figures cited by Lahori and Salih, supplemented by inscriptions on certain buildings, provide an important starting point for further study.]

## 23.1 LAHORI

### DETAILS OF THE ABUNDANT ROYAL TREASURY

**[II, p. 713]** And so much treasure has been accumulated until now under this God-given government of eternal foundation that the accountant of imagination and thought acknowledges his helplessness and inability to estimate its extent and quantity--even though the quantity of treasure which His Majesty 'Arsh Ashyani [Akbar] had collected during the fifty-one-year period of his rule and sovereignty, most of which His Majesty Jannat Makani [Jahangir] had spent during his twenty-two-year rule, had itself never been attained by any of the Sultans of Hindustan, let alone by the rulers of other countries.

But greater by far than that is the treasure which has been accumulated in this auspicious reign, through the benedictions of world-adorning intentions and the blessings of universe-embellishing rectitude, notwithstanding the enormous outlays on armies as numerous as the stars and on important military campaigns, which have involved the expenditure of crores of rupees; and on such multitudes of bequests and gifts, that in previous ages, not even half, nay not even one quarter, had ever been given [by other kings]. For example, from the beginning of the accession of this King of cloud-like generosity and ocean-like bounty till the present, the amount that was bestowed in presents alone comes to nine crores and 50 lakhs of rupees in cash and kind--slightly less than half in cash and more than half in kind.

And on the construction of sky-touching edifices, such as empyrean-inclining mosques, opulent palaces, and sky-touching forts; and on the laying out of heart-pleasing gardens, which add to the decoration of the universe and augment the beauty of the world, and through which Paradise-like Hindustan has taken on immeasurable splendor; **[p. 714]** and on the construction of Paradise-resembling tombs and heart-

ravishing villas and pleasant hunting-lodges, the expenditure has exceeded this amount by many degrees.

And concerning the abundance of gems [in the royal treasury], this is clearly demonstrated from the accounting included among the events of the month of Ramazan of the eighth year of this cycle [i.e., the eighteenth regnal year]. In brief, whatever has been accumulated by this holy regime of perfect specimens of different varieties of gems, gold and silver, and golden and silver vessels and utensils, in respect to both quality and quantity, cannot be found in the possession of all the other rulers of the world.

And upon architecture, an amount of two crores and 50 lakhs of rupees has been expended until now. Of this sum, one crore and 10 lakhs have been expended on the buildings of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad: a total of 60 lakhs [on various buildings, including] the marble mosque inside the august fort, which is the prayer-place of celestial beings [i.e., angels] and the replica of the heavenly Bait al-Ma'mur, and the holy Royal Palace and other buildings and gardens; and 50 lakhs on the Illumined Tomb--the like of which the eye of the Sky has not seen on the surface of the earth, a small portion of the wonders of which Paradise-like building has been recounted while recording the events of the sixth year of this cycle [i.e., the sixteenth regnal year].

In addition, 50 lakhs of rupees have been expended to date on the buildings of the Abode of the Caliphate Shahjahanabad, not including the congregational mosque (*jami' masjid*), the foundation of which has only recently [lit., in these days] been laid by the builder of the edifices of fortune and good luck. The description of these heavenly buildings, and the amount of expenditure incurred on each, will therefore be transcribed [under the events of] the first year of the third cycle [i.e., the twenty-first regnal year]. And about 50 lakhs have also been expended on the edifices and gardens of the Abode of Sovereignty Lahore; 12 lakhs on the buildings of Kabul, comprising the mosque, the Royal Palace, and the citadel and the fortification wall surrounding the city; and 8 lakhs on the fortification walls of Qandahar, Bust and Zamindawar; and 12 lakhs on the buildings of Ajmer, Ahmadabad, and other places.

## 23.2. SALIH

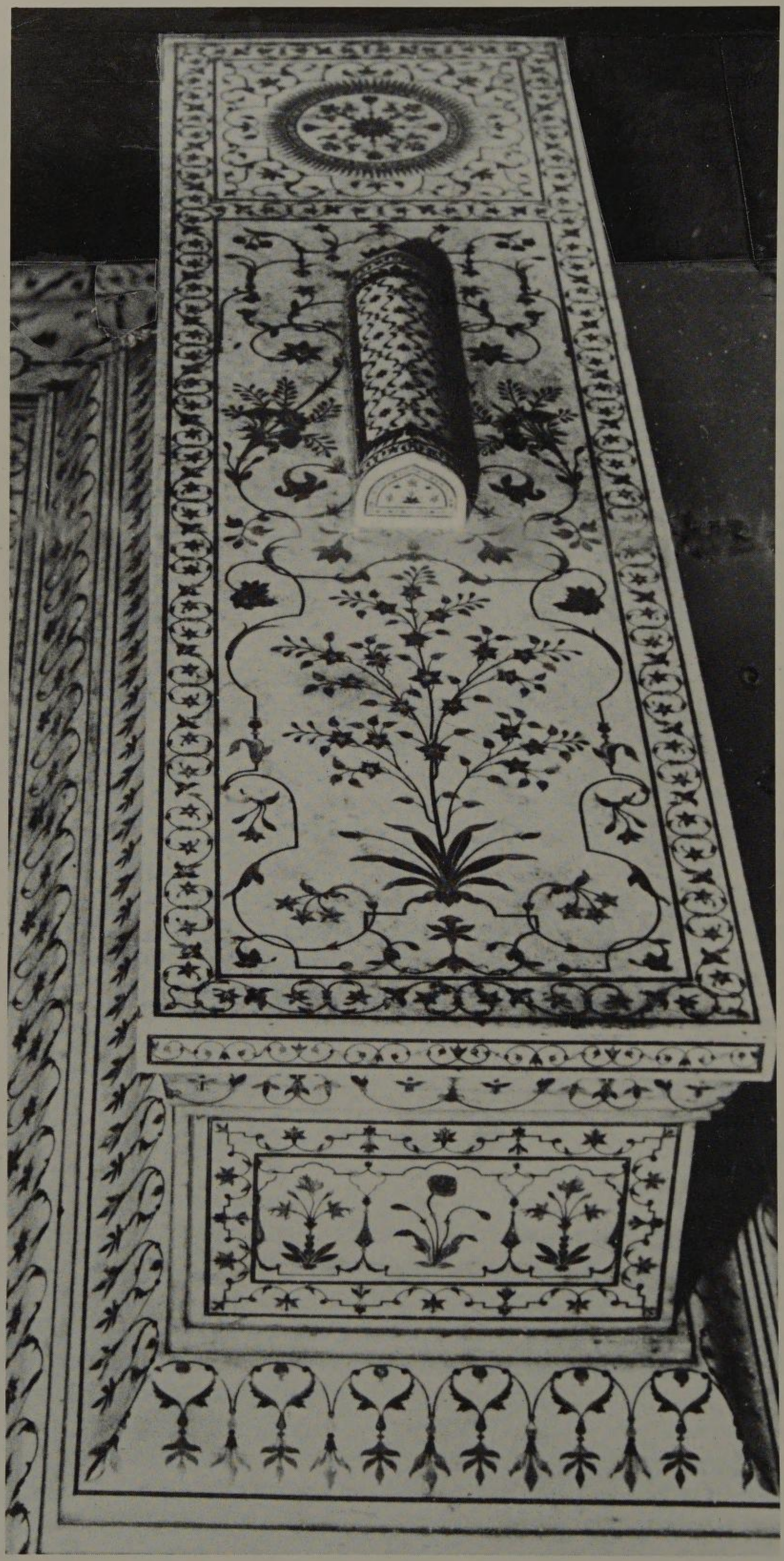
### DETAILS OF THE ABUNDANT ROYAL TREASURY

**[p. 557]** Even though the quantity of treasure which the Emperor Akbar had accumulated during the fifty-one-year period of his reign--most of which the Emperor Jahangir had spent during his twenty-two-year rule--had itself never been attained by any previous sultan, the treasure accumulated in this auspicious reign of His Majesty the Second Sahib Qiran exceeds that by far, notwithstanding the enormous outlays on the army and important military campaigns, which have involved the expenditure of crores of rupees; and on such multitudes of bequests and gifts, that not even half, nay not even one quarter, was ever given [by previous kings]. For example, from the beginning of the accession till now, the amount that has been bestowed on presents comes to nine crores and 60 lakhs of rupees in cash and kind.

on the buildings and retreats in Kashmir; eight lakhs of rupees on the forts of Qandahar and its neighborhood; and 12 lakhs on buildings at Ajmer, Ahmadabad, and other places.

## 23.3. CHANDARBHAN

**[fol. 168]** But the holy and sacred tomb of that Rabi'a of the Age and the Fatima of the Time, which was completed in the everlasting auspicious reign under the superintendence (*ihtimam*) of Makramat Khan and Mir 'Abd al-Karim, has a different quality. And such a great sum was expended on its buildings that the tax of an entire realm and income of a large country would be equivalent to it.



84. Cenotaph of Shah Jahan in upper hall.

# 24

# DEATH AND BURIAL OF SHAH JAHAN

[Accounts of the death and burial of Shah Jahan are contained in five Mughal histories, the most important being the strongly partisan, and extravagantly effusive, *Shah Jahan Nama* by Salih, and the vast official history of the first decade of Aurangzeb's reign, the *'Alamgir Nama* of Muhammad Kazim--who incidentally was the son of Shah Jahan's early chronicler, Qazwini. Salih reveals his bitter resentment of Aurangzeb's imprisonment of Shah Jahan, and especially of the new Emperor's apparent prohibition against a great public funeral procession of the type desired by Jahanara. Kazim, by contrast, suggests that Aurangzeb was deeply grieved by his father's death and departed Delhi for Agra as soon as he could, in order to visit the grave and offer appropriate condolences. The other three brief accounts included here were also written during Aurangzeb's reign, and contain no hint of criticism of his treatment of his father, before or after his death.

[Unfortunately, the histories provide no definitive answer to the question of whether Shah Jahan had originally built the Illumined Tomb to be his ultimate place of burial as well. Salih mentions that Shah Jahan himself "arranged for the means of his funeral and burial," but this must allude only to the final religious rites. Razi's statement, in section 24.3. below, that the body of Shah Jahan was "carried to the mausoleum which the architect of his high aspiration had constructed with this expediency," is also ambiguous.

[Salih mentions that in Shah Jahan's final testament, he urged Jahanara to look after Purhunar Banu Begam, his eldest daughter by his first wife, and also his consort Akbarabadi Mahal--whose exact identity is uncertain, although she may in fact be Shah Jahan's first wife, the daughter of Mirza Muzaffar Husain Safavi. Since no mention is made of his consort Fatehpuri Mahal, she may perhaps have predeceased Shah Jahan; according to the *Ma'asir-i-'Alamgiri*, Akbarabadi Mahal died in 1086/1677.]

## 24.1. SALIH

**[p. 346]** DEPARTURE OF HIS MOST EXALTED MAJESTY, THE KHAQAN, THE SECOND SAHIB QIRAN, SHAH JAHAN BADSHAH GHAZI, FROM THIS ABODE OF GLOOM TO THE GARDEN-HOUSE OF THE HOLY GARDENS, CAUSING THE RESIDENTS OF THE PLAIN OF EXISTENCE TO BECOME GRIEF-STRICKEN BY THIS UNIVERSAL CALAMITY.

*Preamble*

If thou hast a bright eye within thy heart,
Regard the lesson of this azure garden.

Do not, like children, gladden yourself with just the color and scent
Of these flowers by which the garden is flourishing.

Observe that quite a few rose-bushes have new blossoms,
Even after being crushed to earth by one strong wind of Dai.

Neither is Fortune always stable,
Nor does suffering endure forever.

The world, despite all its tyranny, has this merit:
That lamentation and joy are not joined together.

At times we experience suffering, at times happiness;
But very rarely in the selfsame instant.

[p. 347] This pathetic story and painful tale--which has been inked on the page of description with the smoke of the extinguished candle of the heart, and not with the soot of the lamp of rose; from whose every burning word, smoke of grief emanates and sets ablaze the heart of the Water of Life; from whose every word, comprising the entire stock of the heart's grief, the blood of remorse trickles; whose recurring phrases, like waves, have sprung up from their place from great emotion; whose subtle points, on account of the heat of their throat-burning meaning, have shot up from their place, uttering cries like rue-seeds; whose lines you may say are the hyacinth-bed of the garden of remorse, with their tresses spread like mourners; and whose letters are the violet-garden on the bank of the river of calamity, having manifested itself to the gaze of people in the garb of mourners--is an account of the inevitable predestined event and irreparable incident [i.e., the death] of His Majesty, the King of the Kings of the time, monarch of the monarchs of the world, beloved in the eyes of divine mercy, manifestation of the eternal bounties, sun of the zenith of honor and fortune, the most auspicious star [Jupiter] of the constellation of magnificence and glory, master of the necks of the kings of the world, the ruler of the Abode of the Caliphate of Adam, rising place of the rays of learning and knowledge, illustrious mirror of endless manifestation, sun of the sphere of honor and dignity, strength of the government and religion, and ornament of the crown of exaltation: ABU'L-MUZAFFAR SHIHAB AL-DIN MUHAMMAD SAHIB-I-QIRAN-I-SANI SHAH JAHAN PADSHAH GHAZI, who ruled and reigned for a period of thirty-two years with utmost dignity and glory and extreme power and steadfastness; who fashioned new ceremonies and fresh rules for kingship and monarchy; and whose sky-resembling court, for this reason, within a short time, became the resort and gathering-place of nationalities, or rather the compendium of the cream and choicest selection of the skilled persons of the world; with the blessing of whose august attention, the pleasant land of India became the garden of the world; whose prosperous age became the spring season of the world, nay the youthful age of night and day itself [i.e., the universe].

When the throne of kingship of this country became adorned with the accession of the king of heavenly dignity, Muhammad Aurangzeb Bahadur 'Alamgir Padshah Ghazi, His Majesty [Shah Jahan], in accordance with the expediency of Fate, was forced into involuntary seclusion inside the fort of Akbarabad.

But until the final end of the affair and the culmination of the appointed time, when the fortunate star of the well-wishers [p. 348] of that one of lofty threshold had fallen from the zenith of rising ascendancy and to the nadir of setting decline, unclosed doors of his bounty, like the bountiful Creator's very own window, had been kept open to hope-filled hearts and persons in need had constant access to his ocean of generosity, which continued to be overflowing and surging forth--with the help of the learned and pious sayyid, Mir Sayyid Muhammad Qannauji, whose exterior and interior is embellished with laudable achievements and praiseworthy deeds, and who constantly remained present in the most noble assembly from the beginning of the 32nd regnal year [1 Jumada II 1068/6 March 1658]--thus doing justice to borrowed time through recitation of the verses of the glorious Qur'an and the Traditions, and through arranging of advantages for those present in the assembly, helping needy persons in proportion to their condition and in relation to their need.

Within this state [of confinement], His Majesty, with complete composure and quiet modesty, and with tranquil mind and patient heart, divided the hours of the night and day, which had been associated with happiness and prosperity, into the observance of the laid-down rules of devotion and prayers as well as the performance of obligatory duties with all the voluntary ones; and he kept himself constantly busy reciting the glorious Book and copying its verses, repetition of religious formulae, listening to the Traditions and to the narration of the lives of saintly persons of the past, and to dispensing an overflowing benevolence of gifts and gratuities, liberality and generosity.

It is a matter of wonder that the august tongue of His Majesty constantly used to utter words which pointed to his severance of the bonds of worldly relations; indeed, mention of the letter of final departure and passing away from this stage of transitoriness and decline became the cause of his joy and recreation and his happiness and pleasure, nor did gloom or hatred find access to the august mind:

> The news reached the evil eye of Time;
> Unfavorableness of days again showed itself.

But the tyrannical sky, not resting content with the previous unkindness, rose in a fresh strife; and having been jealous even of this condition, threw the stone of disturbance in the midst of composure. And the account of this sorrowful matter is as follows.

*The Final Illness and Death of Shah Jahan*

Although the intimates of the audience hall of honor had previously been tested with different kinds of pains and various types of calamities, and the doors of affliction and distress had been opened on the faces of the favorites **[p. 349]** of that court, nevertheless, suddenly, when two watches (*ghari*) remained of the day of Sunday, the 11th of Rajab of the year 1076 Hijri [17 January 1666]--at the beginning of His Majesty's seventy-fifth solar year, when he had attained the august age of seventy-six years by the lunar calendar--following an application of oil prepared by the physician Rizq Allah, son of Taqarrub Khan of Kairana, the august body became feverish and a severe attack of strangury and dysentery (*pichish-i-shikam*) occurred to the illustrious person; whereupon a rare depression overtook the spiritual form of that angelic figure.

On account of this severe trouble, he was confined to bed for fifteen days. During this period, after nine days, the treatment of Bindraban the surgeon (*jarrah*) was effective, and the urinary tract became unblocked, thus allowing the urine to pass in the previous manner and affording complete relief on account of this. But since the remedy of Fate is beyond the bounds of man's power, and averting the dictates of Destiny is beyond the capacity of even the wise, on account of the weakness of his faculties which had resulted from the effect of pain, his strength failed and weakness dominated. And his lips and tongue, having become insensitive and dry (*khushk*) due to drinking of cold beverages, great deterioration overtook the sublime temperament. At this juncture and in the course of this anguish, when even angelic-natured men develop unsteadiness and seclusion-minded saintly persons lose heart, His Majesty,

who was not bereft of the marks of love and bond with the Creator through the prompting of divine inspiration, had an intuition of the approach of his departure toward nearness to God's unlimited mercy, and he himself arranged for the means of his funeral and burial.

And he also requested that Lady of angelic titles and Princess of the world and its people, Begam Sahib, to be considerate of the feelings and arrange for the comfort of the first fruit of the tree of sovereignty Purhunar Banu Begam--who in respect of age and years was older than all the four princes of high dignity and all the three daughters of auspicious star, and was born of the noble lady of the family of nobility and honor, the praiseworthy daughter of Mirza Muzaffar Husain Safavi--and also of Akbarabadi Mahal and the **[p. 350]** other respected inmates of the harem.

And after that, having fulfilled the rites of bequest and farewell, he sought to comfort and solace the sorrowful heart and aggrieved mind of that queen of auspicious qualities, showing her all sorts of outward and inward affections, and asking her to recite verses from the Qur'an. He himself, too, made his pearl-scattering mouth, which was the casket of the jewels of divine mysteries, replete with the sweetness through recitation with great feeling of the second Profession of Faith (*kalima-i-shahadat*) and the verse "*O our Lord, grant us the best things of this world and the next and save us from the torment of the Fire*" (Qur'an 2.201).

And after three watches had passed from the night of Monday the 26th of Rajab of the said year, 1076 [31 January 1666] he traversed the path of the last stage of divine forgiveness with the feet of acceptance to the Call, in the fond hope of acquiring happiness of stay in the vicinity of divine mercy, and set out to take his seat on the throne (*masnad*) in the mansions of Paradise and enjoy the company of the holy souls.

*Burial of Shah Jahan in the Illumined Tomb*

In accordance with the dictates of protocol and deference and the requisites of devotion and filial piety, that Princess of the Time and Lady of the ladies of lofty station, Begam Sahib [Jahanara], had made preparations for a grand and honorable funeral, appropriate to His Majesty's pomp and dignity, and it had been her original intention to let a world of people share eternal bounty by granting them the good fortune and honor of accompanying and offering funeral prayers for the illumined holy corpse of that focus (*qibla*) of the Age, when after sunrise she planned to have it taken with honor and dignity to the Illumined Tomb (*rauza-i-munavvara*)--for assessing the strength of whose foundation (*asas*) and estimating the extent of whose roof and walls (*saqf wa jidar*), the measuring-rod of the mathematical calculations (*hindsa*) of Wisdom would be incapable, and for taking the measurement of whose expanse (*masahat-i-sahat*), the engineering skills of Imagination itself would be too narrow; which, through its situation in a Paradise-embellishing garden on the bank of the Jumna, serves as a replica (*namudar*) of the "*Gardens beneath which rivers flow*" (Qur'an); and whose like, on account of its supremely bountiful, exhilarating and heart-pleasing spaciousness, its joy-increasing expanse and its purity-bestowing setting, had not come to the notice of the thousand-eyed sky; and which has justifiably become a memorial of the Age since its minarets and walls, built entirely of pure and spotless marble (*sang-i-marmar*), attained completion during the reign of

His Most Exalted Majesty (*A'la Hazrat*), at a cost of 50 lakhs of rupees, over the course of twenty years; and whose every slab (*lauh*) from morn till eve reflects the whiteness of the true dawn, causing the spectator who looks at it to forget his ambition of excursion toward the highest Heaven!

**[p. 351]** Verily, the occasion did require that the pillars of the state and grandees of the court should have carried on their shoulders the august corpse of that manifestation of the qualities of divine beauty and glory and that intimate of the divine pleasure (*rizwan*) and pardon of the Lord of Honor, from the Royal Palace (*daulat khana*) to the Illumined Tomb with utmost reverence and extreme respect, and through performing this most fortunate duty, obtaining thereby honor in both the worlds. And the great leaders and distinguished residents of Akbarabad, and others from among those of noble birth (*ashraf*), the chiefs, religious leaders, clients of the surrounding regions, accomplished and learned persons, men of piety and abstinence, and notable ecclesiasts [lit., men of large turbans], should have also congregated around the august corpse of His Majesty, to bare their heads and feet and make the dome of the sky echo with tumultuous sound through the recitation of the Sacred Profession of Faith (*kalima*), and by uttering the traditional phrases glorifying and exalting God [lit., by reciting the *Tasbih* and *Takbir*].

And the officials of the royal household, raising their hands to pour gold and silver, should have scattered so much along the entire path of the illumined corpse, for the solace of the soul and spirit and the pleasure and joy of that *qibla* of earth and time, that heaps and heaps of silver *dirhams* and piles and piles of gold *dinars* would have been collected for the penniless ones of the time, and rich and poor alike would have received a share and carried away the excess from the table of bounty.

However, since His Majesty [the Emperor 'Alamgir] was in the Abode of the Caliphate Shahjahanabad, and since Begam Sahib for all purposes was powerless (*be-ikhtyar*) [lit., without honor] in the superintendency of such matters, the pivot of the work was in the hands of others. So, towards the end of the night, they carried the body by the stairs of the Royal Tower (*burj-i-musamman*) to the Illumined Tomb; and after offering funeral prayers (*namaz-i-janaza*) at two watches (*pahar*) of the day, they dug into the earth and laid to rest that one of compassionate heart, who was the epitome (*ayat*) of divine mercy and a treasure of unlimited bounty.

See what the azure dome [of Heaven] has done
To the Emperor of the World in old age.

May there be no garden at all, whose master
Is afflicted with such pain on account of its thorns.

Flying from this world, the King of the World
Went unhappy at heart to the gardens of Paradise

Since the jewel of humanity has become so diminished,
All feelings of magnaminity have now died in men.

**[p. 352]** Even the eye's iris has blackened [from mourning],
On account of the death of this paragon of humanity.

The perfumes of the august person of that personified spirit (*ruh*) filled the interior of the earth entirely with their bountiful scent; and his honored body, which was Soul embodied (*jan-i-musawwar*), gave to the dead soil the ornament of life. The felicitous gardener of Paradise Rizwan, having spread out *pa-andaz* mats made from the painted veils of the Houri-eyed ones and the delicate Chinese silks of those damsels of the highest heaven, imparted thousands of beauties and decorations to the expanse of Paradise with carpets of joy and delight. But now new beauty became imparted to it, through the illumined arrival of that chief of courteousness, and gates of joy were opened to the faces of the angels of the celestial world, by way of good omen. And the cup-bearers of the banquet-hall of Paradise, having stepped forth to receive him with the pure drink of mercy, fulfilled the rite of offering jubilation on his happy arrival, and the heavenly Houris began offering salutations and offered the pure drink of Divine pardon as a present to him.

*Grief of Princess Jahanara and Eulogy of Shah Jahan*

How excellent was that valuable essence of spirituality, which displayed his beauty in the garb of the beloved in the eye of the world; and which, for as long as he decorated the plain of existence, became the visible embodiment of their wishes and the incarnation of their happiness to the eyes of men in need. And when he departed from the world, having attained joy through successive Divine pardons, and having become endowed with all comfort and repose through the blessings of Divine mercy, he took his place on the chief seat in Paradise.

Why should not Earth take pride that one of pure Faith
Lies hidden beneath the earth like treasure?

His holy frame finds rest in the dust,
Like holy verses written in "dust-like" (*ghubar*) script.

Witnessing this state of affairs, the precious pearl of the casket of chastity, Begam Sahib, and the other respected ones of the holy precincts of fortune and honor, turned their rose-colored faces into blue-hued ones, through blows and slaps of grief, shedding oceans and oceans of lustrous pearls on the earth from the oysters of their eyes. And due to their great grief, they all donned black dresses, like the pupil of the eye, and added redness to the cheek of Fortune with the tears of their heart's blood. And those other veiled ones of the curtains of honor, having concealed the sun of their cheeks under the darkness of their tresses at the occurrence of this grief-producing event, **[p. 353]** set fire to the pavilion of the sky with the red ruby of [their eyes, reddened from] wailing and lamentation; and having raised the dust of annihilation from the foundation of the world's eternity with their soul-rending lamentation, they tossed the boat of the world's very life into the whirlpool of despair with the storm-raising waves of their tears. And even the gleaming locks and delicate tresses of those weeping ones, through constant plucking of their harp-string strands with the finger-plectrum of grief, also started to weep, with a separate grievous cry coming out from every hair. And the fillets used to tie up the tresses of the tulip-cheeked ones, having become rent into shreds from the grasping of the claws of

sorrow, were hurled heedlessly toward the sun. In this universal calamity, Begam Sahib in particular became exceedingly distraught and distracted, plucking at her hair and face, and seeing the impending death every moment in the mirror of her own eyes' observation; and having become exhausted from a plenitude of grief and a multitude of sorrow, she uttered this anguished lament:

O Sun of mine now hidden from the eyes,
Whenever will there be a dawn to the night of your separation?

O King of the universe and focus (*qibla*) of the world,
Open the eye of compassion and observe my wretched condition.

I cry from grief like a reed, with only wind to grasp;
I burn from sorrow like a candle, but only smoke rises from my head.

Woe at the concealment of that moon-like one in the dark dust, due to the sky's tyranny! Alas for the setting of that light-diffusing sun into the cleft of the earth's bosom, due to the mischief of the End of Time! Death did not feel pity at felling such a fruit-bearing tree of the garden of honor and glory, and the sky did not feel remorse at uprooting such an erect cypress of the garden of caliphate from the river-bank of life. O Spirit embodied! Once, the scent of roses permeated your body; how fare you now under the heap of clay? And O Soul personified! Once, the movement of even the morning breeze used to cause pain to your delicate body; how fare you under layers of dust? **[p. 354]**

In my throat a knot has formed from weeping, like an ocean whirlpool;
If God eases not my burden, it will be difficult for me.

O Houri-eyed ones! Sweep the dust from his cheek with thy tresses;
Hold a banquet, for a wonderful guest is in the mansion.

O companion of the grave! Be his kind source of solace;
Do not disturb him, for his condition is frail.

O king! Since your heart embodies the holy lamp (*mishkat*) of the light of the earth and the sky, why have you accustomed yourself to seclusion? And since your beauty is the Ka'ba of the men of purity, why have you concealed your face from the separated ones? I swear by your dignity and glory that, without the sunshine of your face, the dark night of those aggrieved ones does not turn its face towards dawn; and without the moonlight of your sight, a whole world lost in the darkness of bewilderment cannot find its way. Just once more, from the east direction (*mashriq*) of the balcony, manifest yourself like the sun for the benefit of your admirers (*mushraq*), for an entire world has been overtaken by the calamity of the pain of waiting. And for a moment, by the luster of the light of your presence, let the star of auspicious fortune shine forth to the Royal Audience Hall, for an entire world is in mourning on account of not seeing your face. From absence of your sitting there, the Jeweled Seat (*sarir-i-gohar*) and enameled Divine Throne (*'arsh-i-minakar*) have become like embodied blood (*tan-i-khun*); and, like tears from the eyes, it now sheds

fountains upon fountains of its lustrous pearls in a downward stream. And those dear ones of the eyes of clouds [i.e., raindrops], which in the hope of kissing your august feet had sought separation from the bosom of their oyster, having turned pale from the pain of disappointment, are now rolling away in torment.

In short, in the bedchamber of government, it was as if the final day had taken place. Mourning dominated to such an extent that even the veiled ladies in Paradise were affected by the constant lamentations of the ladies of the holy precincts of honor: and rending their collars, they also observed the ceremonies of condolence. And on account of the sighs and lamentations of the mourners, which had swirled into the azure dome, even the Pleiades **[p. 355]** have exposed their faces and unloosed their hair to perform the obsequies of mourning, nor did they omit any of the requisite condolences:

> The sun and moon lamented the one of auspicious mien;
> Day and night wept for the condition of that Lord of the standard.
>
> Since during his reign, both fish and birds enjoyed great comfort;
> The fish wept in water and the birds in air.
>
> The thousand-eyed Sky wept on high,
> Raining downpours over the people of the world.
>
> The creation and the world wept and tore their hair,
> Everywhere, from lane to lane, direction to direction, place to place.
>
> From the sounds of lamentation and noise of mourning, no one slept,
> Since in every house, mourners poured out their grief.

In short, due to the occurrence of this painful and disturbing event, the security and stability of the state packed up baggage and left this world; the heavenly upheaval raised dust on the very surface of the earth; mountains and mountains of grief and worlds and worlds of sorrow penetrated every heart; the world did not remain in its former position, nor did the sky remain on its pivot. And the streets and markets of the city took on the appearance of the plain of Resurrection; and from every house, the cries and lamentations rose to the sky, as if the terror of the Final Day had arrived, turning the house of joy of the world into the mourning-hall of grief. Let the world stop, since no trace of joy remains! And let the sky weep blood, since the pearl of kindness has left the oyster of the sky!

> Can this event's distress ever be alleviated from the heart?
> Perhaps on that day when my King returns from his journey.
>
> I do acknowledge that the Sky is thinking of making amends;
> But how can there be comfort equivalent to this grief?
>
> **[p. 356]** Two-faced Time can never fulfill the heart's desire;
> The deed will not be undone, even if the page is turned.

This irremediable suffering, which has pained the heart of a whole world, cannot be averted by sighs and lament, and the consolation of the heart cannot be achieved by speech and writing. Indeed, even if the expanse of speech were to become as wide as the sky, only a particle of this pain could be described; and if the texts of books and volumes of histories were to be filled with mentions of it till the Day of Judgment, still only a small portion would have been expressed. Under the circumstances, what further can the broken pen write? It is hoped that, as long as the edifice of this ancient house [i.e., the world] is in place, the good results of the supreme writing of that pen of omnipotence may ever be inscribed on the portal (*pishtaq*) of this lofty portico (*rawaq*); and as long as the building of this transitory abode endures, may mention of his legacy of good works and thanksgiving for the continuing benefits of that ocean of liberality and benevolence be the constant formulae of repetition on the tongue of old and young!

## 23.2. MUHAMMAD KAZIM, *'ALAMGIR NAMA*

### *'Alamgir Learns of Shah Jahan's Illness and Sends Prince Muhammad Mu'azzam to Akbarabad*

**[p. 926]** One of the sorrow-increasing events of these days is that it became known, from the reports of the news-writers (*waqia'-i-nigaran*) of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad, that His Exalted Majesty (*Hazrat-i-A'la*) [Shah Jahan]--who had been firmly seated on the couch (*masnad*) of well-being in that center of pomp and glory, and who had turned his face away from outward occupations and worldly engagements, penitentially passing his time of auspicious and blessed hours in devotion and worship of the incomparable Deity--had, in the early part of the night of Monday, the 12th of Rajab 1076 [18 January 1666], suffered an attack of strangury; and the intensity of that pain had lasted until morning.

With the arrival of this distressing news, the august mind of His Majesty the Emperor 'Alamgir became associated with grief and sorrow, and the joy of the convivial assembly of good fortune was marred. And the physicians who gathered the happiness of attending upon the Emperor 'Alamgir--the chief of them being Hakim Momina Shirazi, who possesses perfect diagnostic skill and ingenuity, who has long been familiar with the august temperament of His Majesty [Shah Jahan], and who is the recipient of faith and confidence and the object of attention and favor--were given strict instructions to make copious efforts and endeavors in removing that ailment, and to report from day to day the particulars of the auspicious condition. After that, through successive news reports, it became known that during the whole of Monday and the following night too, there had been no change in the intensity of that ailment, and though in the early part of the following day, there had appeared some slight improvement in the ailment through the treatments and remedies employed, other pains had occurred, and he was experiencing some delirium, and gradually **[p. 927]** his condition was deteriorating.

In view of His Majesty's old age and infirmity, it was evident that due to the intensity and persisting nature of these ailments and pains, the candle of his blessed life could not be made secure against the boisterous wind of the mishap of Time.

Therefore, it was resolved by His Majesty the Emperor that, having raised the standards of departure towards the seat of the caliphate, he should acquire the bounty of seeing the august countenance of His Majesty and have the honor to be present when the inevitable event occurred.

And an exalted order was issued to the officers of the court of sovereignty to exert themselves in making the necessary arrangements of this resolution. But when the preparations for his departure stretched to a few days, out of regard for the obligations of precaution, the Emperor decided that the fine fruit of the tree of fortune and prosperity and precious product of the tree of pomp and luck, the honorable prince Muhammad Mu'azzam should rush to Akbarabad in advance on the wing of speed and haste and gather the happiness of attending on the alchemy-like person of His Majesty, till the arrival of the lofty standards. And on the 23rd of the said month of Rajab 1076 [29 January 1666], having favored that one of lofty rank and exalted lineage with the gift of a special robe of honor and one necklace of pearls, he bade him farewell.

**[p. 928]** THE DEPARTURE OF THAT ONE CARRYING THE MARKS OF DIVINE PARDON, THAT RECIPIENT OF DIVINE SUPPORT COVERED WITH HEAVENLY GRACES, HIS MOST EXALTED MAJESTY THE SECOND SAHIB QIRAN, TO THE SPACIOUS PLACE OF THE WORLD OF HOLINESS AND ETERNAL GRANDEUR.

*Preamble*

A world in which there is no enduring comfort,
Is not a fit abode for the wise.

A world which offers no everlasting peace,
Is worthless, no matter how one looks at it.

Intelligent persons with wakeful hearts and the truth-loving cherishers of wisdom, who are conversant with the mysteries of knowledge and insight and familiar with the workings of this workshop of creation, know truly that this desolate abode of weak foundation and this ancient ruin of illusory flourishing become the residence of the pure soul for a few days only, and are not the lasting manifestation of its lustrous essence.

The body is merely a halting place along the path followed by those invisible wayfarers, the sagacious beings of spirits and souls, who have, in accordance with the decree of the glorious Mighty Lord, temporarily shifted from the pleasure-house of the state of holiness and the capital of the celestial realm, with the intention of acquiring divine knowledge and perfection. And having mounted on steeds of material forms and on horses of physical bodies, by the exigencies of divine wisdom, these spirits journey into the plain of visible appearance and being and into the valley of phenomenality and replication; and arriving at the land of impermanent foundation, they deposit there, like travelers, the baggage of sojourn; and putting on the robe of association with the physical world on the shoulder of nature, they yield to its dictates and requirements until, through their cognitive faculties and senses and through outward and inner perceptions, which are the highest means of acquiring knowledge of His Holiness the Lord of the Lords, they perceive the rarities of the

Incomparable Lord's creation and wonders of his workshop of the universe; and try, in proportion **[p. 929]** to the time at their disposal and capacity, to know and worship the world-creating God, which alone is the ultimate goal of creation.

And without being deluded by their transitory existence, and without succumbing to the short-lived pleasures of that undependable abode [i.e., the world], these spirits acquire an inexhaustible fund of pleasure and joy of true life, through the precious pearl of gnosticism and knowledge of God and through the authentic warrant of return to their original abode. And making the necessary arrangements for return from this journey, they are in constant readiness and turn their ears toward the soul-refreshing call "*O thou contented soul, return to Thy Lord willingly and happily*" [Qur'an].

And when the command is sounded, they receive the inevitable order of Fate with happiness and pleasure, and pick up their baggage of temporality with the intention of setting out for the Ka'ba of return and the resolve of returning to the audience-hall of reunion, from the plain of this transitory abode and the expanse of this halting place full of peril and adversity. And once again arriving at the pleasure house of the state of intimacy and the soul-nourishing land of holiness, being covered with the bounty of divine mercy and pardon, the spirits are granted their desire of everlasting pleasure and their inheritance of eternal life, endowed with perpetual rest and comfort and encompassed by security and repose, through perpetually having a vision of the rays of the beauty and glory of the never-declining Living God, and through perception of the everlasting bounty and enduring bliss.

Particularly, this is true for the select ones of the court of Unity and the ones in Eternity's favor, to which group of angelic grandeur belong the leaders of the community of Islam and the religion-cherishing kings of high station. For this majestic group are co-partners in authority with the doctors of religion and holy-souled masters, in point of their high position of spiritual Essence and their lofty station of God-given soul, learning and insight; the vast court of the unstable world is too narrow for the galloping of the horses of their high aspirations, and the divinely supported exalted nature and spiritual power of those angelic-natured ones constantly aspire to height and eminence and seek ascent on the most high ladders.

Particularly **[p. 930]** is this true of such a fortunate person, who, having traveled through the stages of fortune and felicity, through the auspiciousness of the bounty and gift of the Exalted God, had attained the utmost degrees of success in the world and in traversing that path full of perils, and not let go the thread of vigilance of heart and cleverness of gait, nor the observance of the duties of cherishing religion and dispensing justice and diffusing the light of public good and liberality on humanity at large; and who, before the inevitable occurrence [of his death], had turned away from the engagements of the world of Form, which cause diversions from the nearness and close relations with the world of Reality, and had been successful in making amends for and rectifying the slips pertaining to the human condition.

Chief of the proofs that corroborate this preamble is the predestined event of the death, full of marks of divine forgiveness, of that recipient of the bounty of divine favors, that one encompassed with the attentions of the supports of the Glorified Lord, His Majesty Firdaus Ashyani [Shah Jahan's posthumous title; "Abiding in Paradise"], the Second Sahib Qiran, who, having passed the days of pomp and

prosperity and of kingship and caliphate with justice, religiosity, by properly looking after the subjects at large and acquiring the good pleasure and happiness and approbation of His Holiness the Creator of creatures, had the grace, after thirty-one years reign and rule, of abandoning engrossment in the affairs of the world and of adopting seclusion and aloofness, and spent the rest of the precious life with complete composure of mind and concentration of heart in devotion, prayer and worship of God.

And when the appointed time of respite and destined period of sojourn in this world of deception and inn of joylessness came to an end, the caller of "*And Allah beckons you toward the abode of Eternal peace*" [Qur'an] conveyed the tidings of recall to the truth-hearing ears of that religion-cherishing leader. And having made the tongue of Faith utter the acceptance speech of "I am ready" (*labbaika*), by way of truthful servitude, he set out for the Ka'ba of union with the provisions of pious deeds and noble actions and added to the stature of the throne of the sovereignty of the Eternal world with his religion-cherishing majesty.

*Shah Jahan's Final Illness and Death*

The elucidation of this great catastrophe is that when the illness of His Majesty, as has been mentioned, **[p. 931]** became intense and prolonged, and weakness and infirmity dominated the august body, there also occurred other maladies and contrary ailments, the treatment of one of which caused the others to be intense. And on account of the weakening of the faculties, much palsy and throbbing began to affect the limbs, and from day to day his physical strength decreased while the ascendancy of disease increased. And the treatments prescribed by the physicians, such as the use of drugs and regulating his intake of food and drink, did not have any effect whatsoever; and in no way, did the picture of health and recovery show its face in the mirror of his condition.

Finally, in the early parts of the night of Monday, the 26th of Rajab 1076 [night of 31 January 1666], the intensity of the disease having increased, there were indications of further deterioration in his condition and symptoms of the approach of death. And with the strength of divine grace and power of faith, His Majesty, even in that condition, turned the face of his heart towards the Holy and Almighty Lord, and divested his heart of everything other than God. And His Majesty first offered thanks, in the most eloquent manner, for the great and limitless bounties of God which had been granted to him by [God's] limitless grace and kindness. Next he proclaimed his resignation and submission to the Divine Decree and Heavenly Fate, which neither rich nor poor, nor noble nor minister can escape or remedy. He then began to recite repeatedly with his truth-descending tongue the holy Second Profession of Faith (*kalima*), in full possession of his senses.

While in the midst of this state, he prohibited Begam Sahib [Jahanara]--that veiled one behind the curtain of magnificence and respect and occupier of the chief seat in the palace of glory and grandeur, that cream of the veiled ones of the time and queen of the world--as well as those other veiled ladies of the holy precincts of chastity and worshippers at the audience-hall of honor who had the honor of being present, from crying and weeping, or giving vent to lamentation and grief. And having made noble bequests and great admonitions which were tantamount to the sum-total of eternal

happiness, he comforted with holy faith-augmenting phrases the hearts of the mourners suffering from the pain of calamity.

**[p. 932]** And a moment thereafter, the '*Arsh*-aspiring bird of graceful spirit of that exalted monarch, having shaken from its wings the dust of things other than God, flew away with the intention of making an excursion to the garden of holiness and taking a stroll through the rose-garden of Paradise; and taking its eternal seat in the heavenly pleasure-house, it joined the parrots of the lote-tree of that Paradise Abode (*ashyan-i-jannat*) [lit., Paradise-nest].

On account of the occurrence of this calamitous event, the revolutions of Time donned the dress of grief and the sky sprinkled the dust of remorse on its head. And the angels of the celestial abodes joined company with the dwellers of earth's arena in venting grief over this heart-consuming tragedy and rending asunder the collar of the Soul's garment. And the bright ones of the highest spheres and the residents of the celestial sky set out for the realm of the earth with the intention of offering condolences for this dreadful event. The hearts of the small and great were plundered by grief and sorrow; and the minds of low-born and high-born alike became the descending-place of distress and remorse:

Grief and mourning now became universal,
Patience went in pursuit of Repose.

Alas, for that priceless pearl,
Which took its final rest in a wooden oyster [i.e., a coffin].

Alas for that departed personification of Majesty!
Alas for one who enhanced the world's beauty!

Even though many monarchs have come and gone,
No one with a vigilant heart like this has passed.

How complete in his senses he left this intoxicated assembly!
A wakeful fortune went to the slumber of non-existence.

As long as this ancient house [i.e., the world] is remembered,
His soul will remain fresh from his good fame.

*Burial of Shah Jahan in the Illumined Tomb*

In short, after the occurrence of this grief-filled event, at the insistence of that Lady of holy veil and the sun's curtains, that queen of the world, Begam Sahib, Hoshdar Khan, the custodian of the fort (*qila'dar*), and Khwaja Phul entered the Royal Palace, opened the wicket gate of the fort, and sent someone to summon both Sayyid Muhammad Qannauji--who combines accomplishment in piety with the honor of poverty and sayyidship, and during the period of the confinement of His Most Exalted Majesty Firdaus Ashyani [Shah Jahan] **[p. 933]** had constantly enjoyed the happiness of attendance upon him, and Qazi Qurban, in whom vested the duty of chief Qazi [religious judge] of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad, to come and attend to the arrangements for the funeral and burial.

And at two watches of the night they came, and first attended to the matter of the omissions of prayer and fasting; and in spite of the fact that at no time had these been missed by that successful monarch, a certain enormous sum of money was fixed for making amends for any inadvertent omissions. After that, they were admitted to the Royal Tower (*burj-i-musamman*) in which place, the bird of His Majesty's Spirit, having its abode in Paradise, had died; and by the order of the Lofty Lady, they shifted the holy corpse to the hall (*aiwan*) which is near the said Tower, and attended to the ritual bathing [of the dead body] according to the prescribed revealed canon and orthodox custom (*sunna*) of the trusted Prophet--may Allah's salutations and peace be upon him and upon his descendants and his companions, all of them.

After settling upon the arrangements of funeral and burial, they placed the resplendent body in a coffin (*sanduq*) of sandal wood, and the basement gate (*darwaza-i-shib*) of the said tower, which had been sealed (*masdud*), was opened and the holy corpse was taken out of the fort in a worthy manner. And having carried it through the gate of the outer fortification wall (*darwaza-i-sherhaji*), the gate of which was opposite to the basement gate, Hoshdar Khan, the governor (*subadar*), with all the imperial servants escorted the coffin to the bank of the river, which was reached in the early morning [26 Rajab 1076/1 February 1666]. And having carried the mercy-scattered coffin of that one worthy of the pardon of the Divine Nourisher along the river, it was taken to the fragrant Illumined Tomb--which had been erected by the architect (*mi'mar*) of the precious aspiration of His Majesty, within which lies the illumined grave (*marqad*) of that Lady of the rank of the Pleiades, and of the Sun's curtains and veil of Holiness; that one possessed of the manners of Rabi'a and of the achievements of Asiya; that Lady of the ladies of the world and Chief of the women of the time and Elect of the ladies of the Age; that leader of the pious ladies and model for the holy women; that Queen of angelic habits and the Lady of cherubic qualities; that recipient of the lights of divine mercy and the arrival-place of the favors of the pardon **[p. 934]** of the Nourishing Lord; that second Bilqis and prototype of Maryam: Her late Majesty the Queen Mumtaz al-Zamani (and the detailed account of that pleasure-house of holiness has been given in the excellent book *Padshah Nama*).

Thereupon Sayyid Muhammad Qannauji, Qazi Qurban and the rest of the pious and the righteous offered prayers over the bier (*janaza*) of that one covered with the rays of divine pardon; and having taken the holy corpse inside the tomb (*gumbad*), they consigned it to the mercy of God.

*Eulogy of Shah Jahan*

O God! Just as Thy grace helped him to effect the severance of the bonds of evil and mischief, the eradication of the roots of rebellion and revolt, and the demolition of the foundation of oppression and inequity, in accordance to the revealed code (*shari'at*), then so long as the fame of his government reaches the spur of the heaven and the utmost reaches of the atmosphere, and so long as the regions of this earth and its environs and the expanse of this world and its periphery and illumined by the flashes of his powerful sovereignty and lights of his manifest justice, pray lodge him in the most remote stations of paradise and upper apartments of heaven, raise him to

the group of men cognizant of Reality, Truth and Certainty, and cause him to drink the pure water and be matched with the Houris of Paradise!

And for His Majesty's death, bearing the marks of divine forgiveness, one of the poets composed this chronogram, "The King of the World has died" (*Shah-i-Jahan kard wafat*), and the writer of this book of fortune has thus versified it:

When Shah Jahan, the king of angelic properties,
Arose from the throne of life and set out for the Hereafter,
I sought from Reason the year of this event,
And Wisdom told me: "The King of the World has died"
(*Shah-i-Jahan kard wafat*).

The period of the life of that bedecker of the throne of the sovereignty of eternity was seventy-six years and three months and twenty-seven days according to the lunar reckoning, and seventy and four years minus three days according to the solar; and the period of the rule and reign of His Majesty was thirty-one years **[p. 935]** and two months and twenty-three days by the lunar calendar and thirty years and four months and eighteen days by the solar.

*Arrival of Prince Mu'azzam in Akbarabad and Subsequent Departure of the Emperor 'Alamgir from Shahjahanabad*

In short, toward the latter part of the night of the 26th of Rajab 1076 [i.e. in the early hours of 1 February 1666], after the destined event of the death of that one encompassed in excellence and pardon of the Lord of Glory had taken place, this distressing news reached that shining star of the constellation of pomp and glittering pearl of the casket of sovereignty, Prince Mu'azzam of exalted station, who was traveling toward the seat of caliphate under august orders, when he was seven *kos* from Akbarabad.

And that one of high pedigree and lofty lineage, having traversed that distance on the wings of speed, arrived at the city in the early part of the day that the king having his abode in Paradise was buried. And having gone that very day to the august fort, the Prince performed the ceremonies of mourning and condolence to that queen of angelic character and angelic descent, Begam Sahib, and to the other veiled ones of the curtains of good fortune; and in accordance with the exalted royal order [of the Emperor 'Alamgir], he also carried out the duties of distribution of alms and charity and readings of the Qur'an. And repeatedly holding the assembly of *maulud* in a manner befitting and worthy of the illustrious monarchs and emperors of high worth, he imparted joy and comfort to the holy soul of His late Majesty through distribution of money among the deserving people and feeding the pious and the learned. And he also showed high favors to Sayyid Muhammad Qannauji, Qazi Muhammad Qurban and the group of shaikhs and men of excellence and masters of piety.

And towards the end of the 26th of the said month of Rajab, in the evening of the very day on which this event had occurred [i.e., in the evening of 1 February 1666], the swift-footed messengers, having come from the seat of caliphate to the court of dignity and glory, conveyed this horrible news.

On hearing of this dreadful event, the august heart of His Majesty the Emperor 'Alamgir became overwhelmed with thousands of griefs and sadnesses and filled with abundant remorse and sorrow; whereupon, the tears of grief poured forth uncontrollably on the auspicious cheeks. And despite his royal dignity and forebearance, his Solomon-like majesty and gravity, and his great power of patience and royal restraint, he displayed evidences of great sadness and emotion and such signs of deep grief and mourning as had never been witnessed and seen in His Majesty by anyone at the occurrence of any heart-rending event. And such great torrents of tears rushed down from the world-seeing eyes of that monarch of the world that those close to the court of government and confidantes of the holy precincts of kingship had the edifices of their endurance broken.

And in the grief caused by this event, His Majesty and the honored princes and princesses of high worth, and all the fruits of the gardens of modesty and holy ones of the curtains of chastity donned dresses as white as the dawn. And in the same way, the worthy nobles and pillars of the stable government also put on the dress of mourning. And the august order was issued that in speech and talk and in letters and edicts, the illustrious name of that king having his resting place in the eternal Paradise should be mentioned and written as His Majesty Firdaus Ashyani.

And it came to His Majesty's Truth-interpreting tongue that his heart's desires and mind's wishes had been that he should have been present at the time of the occurrence of this event, so that his eyes might have been lighted up with the last sight of His late Majesty, thereby earning reward and merit by fulfilling the requisite customs associated with this inevitable event. But since, due to the dictates of Fate, that hope was not fulfilled, by way of making amends, he did not cancel his departure for Akbarabad, but decided instead to hasten to that Abode of the Caliphate and seek blessings from visiting the illumined grave and holy tomb of His late Majesty; and by offering condolences and comforting that dear sister of holy veils and pure curtains, Begam Sahib, and the other mourners in this calamity, he would thereby cause them to remove their clothes of mourning.

In consequence of this resolute intention, on the 4th of Sha'ban 1076 [9 February 1666], corresponding to the 22nd of Bahman, by the august order, the auspicious camp equipage of the pavilions of fortune was taken out and set up at Khizrabad with all pomp and dignity. **[p. 937]** And on this day, Amir Khan placed before the most luminous sight, the offering comprising one hundred Iraqi and Turki horses, rare jewels, gem-studded utensils, and fine pieces of cloth stuff and goods.

And on the 9th of the said month of Sha'ban 1076 [14 February 1666], corresponding to 26th of Bahman, which was the date determined for the setting out of the victorious standards, Danishmand Khan, having been appointed to the governorship and charge of the auspicious fort of the Abode of the Caliphate [Shahjahanabad], was honored with the present of a robe of honor and a horse. And since early return of the lofty standards was decided upon, it was resolved that the veiled ladies of the pavilions of glory and pomp and the covered ones behind the curtains of respect and reverance should not have the good fortune of accompanying His Majesty, but should remain instead in the palace of sovereignty.

And after twelve watches (*gharis*) had passed of the said day, His Majesty the Emperor boarded the boat of fortune, with divine dignity and magnificence of royal

pomp, from the august fort and set out for Khizrabad. And having made auspicious halt in the bountiful mansions of that place, he set off next day from there, after deciding that he would travel by way of the Jumna river, [on the bank of which] at every stage, a Paradise-like garden and a pleasing lofty edifice had been constructed for the exalted royal stay.

And since it was the intention within the august mind that, after reaching the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad, he would not stay in the auspicious fort until he had fulfilled the ceremonies of condolence and consolation of the veiled ones of the curtains of chastity and modesty, a lofty order was issued to the royal stewards (*pishkaran-i-sultanat*) that the mansion (*manzil*) of "Bi-Shikoh" ["without glory"; i.e., Dara Shikoh] should be cleaned and adorned for the august sojourn.

At the second stage, Amir Khan, the governor of Kabul, was favored with the gift of a robe of honor, a horse with golden trappings, and a dagger studded with pearls, and was permitted to hasten to the seat of the kingdom, Kabul. At the sixth stage, Hoshdar Khan, the governor of Akbarabad who had received the glorious cavalcade, **[p. 938]** attained the honor of making auspicious obeisance. Next day, the Faujdar of Mathura, 'Abd al-Nabi Khan, had the good fortune to pay his respects [lit., to kiss the earth].

*Arrival of the Emperor 'Alamgir at Akbarabad and His Visit to the Illumined Tomb*

In short, the lofty standards traversed stage by stage, and on the 20th of the said month of Sha'ban 1076 [25 February 1666], corresponding to seventh of Isfandarmuz, which was the fixed hour for entrance into the Abode of the Caliphate, His Majesty the Emperor boarded the boat from the village of Bahadurpur and set out for the most noble city of Akbarabad. And after reaching that center of sovereignty, he graced by his arrival the mansion of Bi-Shikoh, which had been made ready for the august sojourn, by being adorned with royal furniture and carpets.

And on the next day, having diffused the light of his arrival at the Illumined Tomb of His Majesty, whose residence is the highest Heaven and whose abode is Paradise, he fulfilled the ceremonies of circumambulation and visitation and added comfort and joy to the holy souls of his noble parents with recitation of the Fatiha, and prayers invoking divine mercy and forgiveness. Whereupon the heart in which Truth resides became greatly moved and overwhelmed with feeling, and many pearls of tears were scattered from the tear-raining eyes over those two graves illumined with divine pardon.

And having granted 12,000 rupees to the attendants and caretakers (*mujawir*) of that mausoleum marked with divine bounties, he offered the afternoon (*zuhr*) prayers in the mosque of the illumined mausoleum; and when he had performed all these requisite observances he returned. After one day, His Majesty imparted loftiness to the auspicious fort with the dignity of his august footsteps and illumined the night-chamber of fortune with the rays of his countenance having the luster of the sun. And having met with that noble palm-tree of the orchard of pomp and excellent fruit of the plant of grandeur, that queen of the veil of holiness having the sun's curtains, Begam Sahib, he observed the formalities of mourning and condolence, comforting her noble heart with all sorts of kindnesses and gentleness.

**[p. 939]** In the same way, he fulfilled the requisites of favors and kindnesses to all the veiled ones of the curtains of honor; and having presented them with worthy dresses of fine cotton to each one of them, he caused them to remove their clothes of mourning. And after two watches of the day had passed, he returned. After two days, he again graced the auspicious fort with his arrival and imparted happiness to that queen of angelic habits with the bounty of his illumined presence. And a lofty order was issued that all the illustrious nobles and servants of the threshold-supporting sovereignty should proceed to the holy precincts of good fortune and should offer obeisance to that queen of angelic veils and make offerings. And when the servants of the court of the caliphate, in compliance with the order necessitating obedience presented themselves at the threshold of the night chamber of fortune and offered obeisance (*kornish*), rich robes were presented to all the nobles of the *mansab* rank of Hazari [1,000 *zat*] and above, from the establishment of that adorner of the curtains of the howdah of honor and fortune.

And after a few days, His Majesty once again gladdened his worthy sister of angelic descent through his visit (*didar*) [lit., sight] marked with auspiciousness, and bestowed favors and comfort. And that queen of angelic manners, having performed the ceremonies of *pa-andaz* [spreading carpet] and *nisar* [scattering coins over the head], offered suitable presents before his illumined gaze. Every few days thereafter, His Majesty diffused the light of his arrival at the Illumined Tomb and gathered rewards and happiness by reciting prayers and the Fatiha. By holding the *maulud* assembly repeatedly in that mausoleum filled with divine bounty, he dispensed gifts of happiness to the absolved soul of His Majesty Firdaus Ashyani--whose place is in the highest heaven--through the distribution of alms to the needy and the poor and bestowing presents to the pious and the accomplished.

And in view of the fact that some exigencies of state and the kingdom demanded that the lofty standards should sojourn in the Abode of the everlasting Caliphate Akbarabad for a few days more, he summoned the veiled ones of the curtains of sovereignty from the Abode of the Caliphate Shahjahanabad. He therefore ordered 'Abd al-Nabi Khan, Mukhlis Khan and Khidmat Khan *Khwajasara* to hasten to that center of good fortune and be in attendance on the howdah of chastity of the Begams [i.e., wait upon them during the entire journey]. Since the auspicious festival of 'Id al-Fitr would soon be observed [on 1 Shawwal 1076/6 March 1666], a lofty order was issued that they should also bring with them the victorious Jeweled Throne, as well as all the means and paraphernalia for observing the happy feast (*jashn*).

## 24.3. 'AQIL KHAN RAZI, *WAQI'AT-I-'ALAMGIRI*

**[p. 143]** In the month of Rajab of the year 1076 [January 1666], His Majesty, the Emperor (*khaqan*) and Second Sahib Qiran, having been overtaken by affliction and suffering due to the disease of strangury (*habs-i-baul*) in the royal apartments at Akbarabad, reclined his august body for a few days on the bed of weakness and infirmity. And on the night of Monday, the 26th of the said month, after the expiry of three astronomical *gharis*, having listened with the ear of willingness to the call of "*Return thou to thy Lord willingly*" [Qur'an], in his full senses and power of

comprehension, like the reality-comprehending vigilant persons, he engaged himself [p. 144] in disposing the matter of his will. And having traversed the path to the destination of the Hereafter, with the light of the candle of faith and under the escort of the most holy name of the Creator of the Soul and the World, he walked gracefully to the highest Paradise.

On account of the expediency of the time, at that moment, none of the princes of high pedigree and noblemen of lofty status was present; consequently, at the approach of first dawn, the corpse, covered with the mercy of the Nourishing Lord, of that monarch of sky-like might, contrary to the rule (*qanun*) of illustrious kings and the practice of his august father and ancestors was placed on a boat by a few persons among the eunuchs (*khwajasara*), and others and carried by way of the river to the mausoleum (*gumbad*) which the architect of his high aspiration had constructed with this expediency (*maslahat*).

And the Qazis, the elite (*ashraf*) and leading men of the city, the learned and scholars, and the pious men of the time presented themselves and recited prayers (*namaz*) over His Majesty; and in accordance with the august traditions of the Chief of the Messengers--may God's salutations and peace be upon him--his delicate body and precious corpse was interred in that illumined grave (*marqad*) and holy tomb (*mazja'*), and entrusted to the pardon of the Glorified Lord and mercy of the Merciful God: "*Verily, we belong to God and to God we shall return*" [Qur'an].

## 24.4. MUSTA'ID KHAN, *MA'ASIR-I-'ALAMGIRI*

*Death and Burial of Shah Jahan*

[p. 25-26] From the reports of the news-writers of Akbarabad, it was learned that His Exalted Majesty (*Hazrat-i-A'la*) had been seized with strangury (*habs-i-baul*) on the 12th of Rajab 1076 [18 January 1666]. And since the severity of the disease was on the increase, the physicians in despair had ceased [lit., withheld the hand from] treatment. It was the august intention [of Emperor 'Alamgir] that he should raise the standards of departure in that direction; and by way of precaution, on the 23rd of the said month of Rajab [27 January], he sent Prince Muhammad Mu'azzam in advance.

But in the early parts of the night of Monday, the 26th of Rajab [night of 31 January], the intensity of disease overcame His Majesty, and the victory-filled Soul of that exalted monarch (*khaqan*) flew towards the garden of Paradise.

After the occurrence of this inevitable event, [at the request of] that Lady canopied by holiness, Begam Sahib, Rao Andaz Khan, Khwaja Buhlul, Sayyid Muhammad Qannauji and Qazi Qurban entered the Privy Chamber (*ghusal khana*) and attended to the funeral ablution and shrouding (*tajhiz-wa-takfin*), and then carried the corpse outside the fort through the gate of the Shah Burj (*burj-i-musamman*). And accompanied by Hoshdar Khan, the governor (*subadar*), they carried the coffin (*tabut*) along the river Jumna and conveyed it to the Illumined Tomb of Mumtaz al-Zamani, which had been erected by the architect of the high aspiration of His Majesty; and having offered funeral prayers they consigned it to the environs of Divine Mercy inside the mausoleum (*gumbad*). One of the poets devised the chronogram: "The King of the World has died" [*Shah-i-Jahan kard wafat* = 1076];

and another chronogram for the death of Shah Jahan was found by Ashraf Khan, "May God be pleased [with him]" [*razi Allah* = 1076].

The span of his life was seventy-six years and three months; and the period of his reign, thirty-one years and two months. In the latter part of the night of death, this news reached the prince who was then at a distance of seven *kos*. Having reached the city in the early part of the day of burial, he observed the ceremonies of condolence (*taziyat*). After the receipt of the distressing news, His Majesty the Emperor, the princes and princesses, and the begams donned the dress of mourning. And it was ordered that in letters and orders, the name of His Majesty (*A'la Hazrat*) should be written as Firdaus Ashyani ["Abiding in Paradise"].

*Arrival of the Emperor 'Alamgir at Akbarabad*

And on the 9th of Sha'ban 1076 [14 February 1666], the Emperor 'Alamgir turned the face of attention in the direction of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad, proceeding by way of the river with the intention of paying a visit to the holy tomb (*marqad*). On the 20th of Sha'ban [25 February], having alighted in the mansion (*haveli*) of Dara Shikoh, the next day he fulfilled the ceremonies of visit [to the tomb]. Next day, he went to the fort and carried out the formalities (*marasim*) of inquiry and comforting of the palm tree of the gardens of pomp, Begam Sahib, and all the veiled ones of the pavilions of honor, causing them to remove their dress of anguish (*kadurat*). And in view of certain important affairs, having considered it expedient, he summoned the veiled ones of the curtains of magnificence [i.e., the ladies of the royal seraglio] from the Abode of the Caliphate Shahjahanabad.

## 24.5. BAKHTAWAR KHAN, *MIRAT AL-'ALAM*

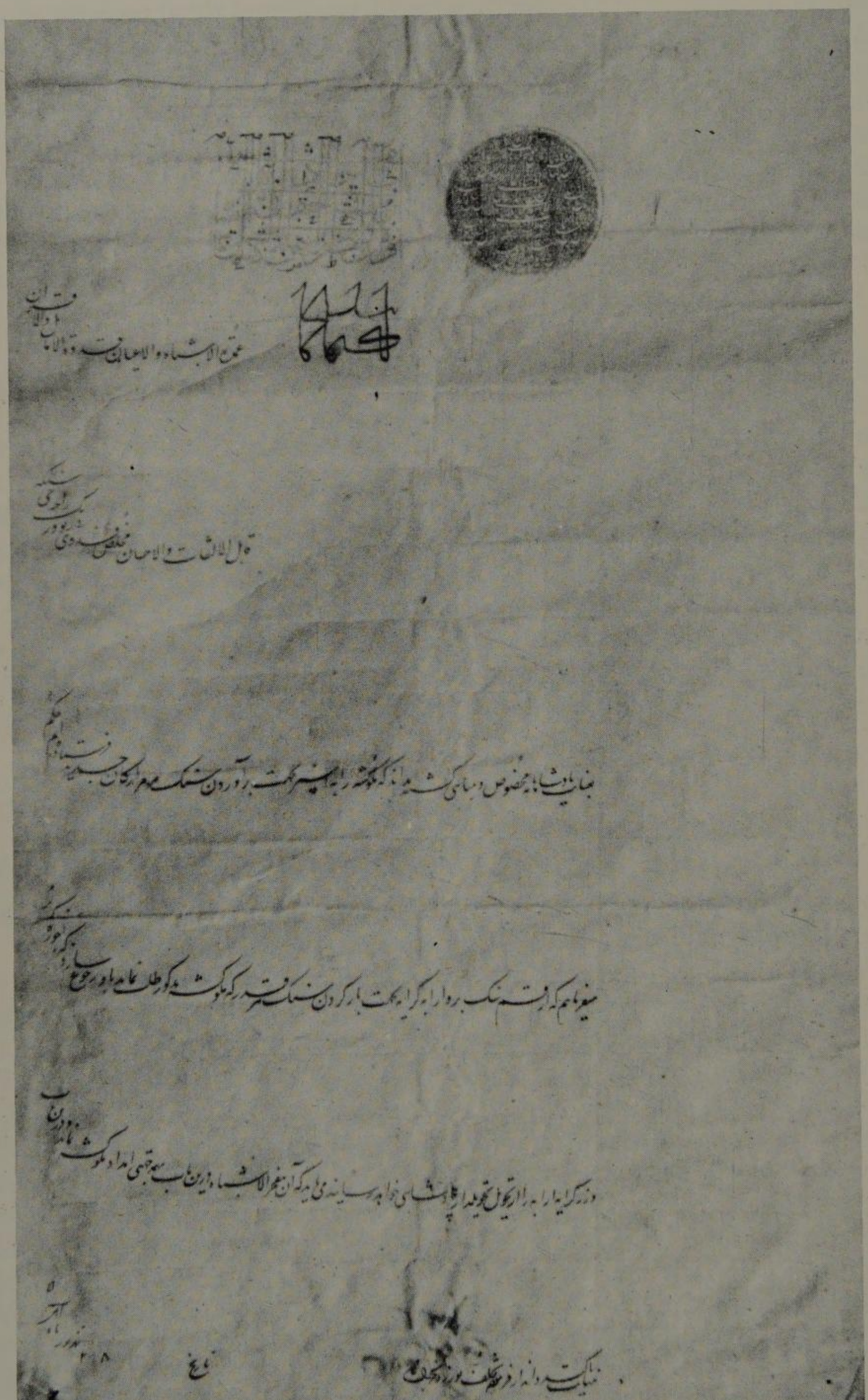
*Arrival of the Emperor 'Alamgir at Akbarabad*

And on the 9th of the month of Sha'ban 1076 [14 February 1666], the Emperor 'Alamgir turned his face to the Abode of the Caliphate [Akbarabad] with the intention of visiting (*ziyarat*) the illumined grave (*marqad*) of His Majesty and for offering condolences to his sister of holy veils, Begam Sahib, and the other mourners.

On the 20th of Sha'ban [25 February], he arrived at Akbarabad by way of the river; and having granted the honor of arrival to the mansion of Dara Shikoh, next day, he cast the light of his feet at the Illumined Tomb of His Majesty Firdaus Ashyani, having his place in the highest heavens, and performed the rites of visit and circumambulation [of the grave]. And he added to the repose of the holy soul of his noble parents through recitation of the Fatiha and prayers. And as his heart, which is the abode of Truth, became overwhelmed with compassion, he scattered, by way of *nisar* offering, many pearls of tears from the constantly tear-shedding eyes over those two graves covered with light of divine forgiveness. And 12,000 rupees were granted to the servants and attendants (*mujawiran*) of that tomb (*mazar*) having the marks of divine bounty.

# PART II

# THE TAJ MAHAL IN MUGHAL DOCUMENTS



85. Farman to Raja Jai Singh, dated 20 September 1632. Bikaner, Rajasthan State Archives.

## 25

# ROYAL FARMAN TO RAJA JAI SINGH, DATED 28 SHARIWAR, FIFTH REGNAL YEAR

[Out of the hundreds of official Mughal documents that must once have existed pertaining to the construction of the Taj Mahal--ranging from daily pay slips for vast numbers of workmen to royal farmans issued periodically by Shah Jahan--only four farmans survive This one is dated 20 September 1632, and requests Raja Jai Singh to expedite shipments of marble, almost certainly intended for Akbarabad, by advancing wages to the stonecutters and rental for carts, against reimbursement from the state treasury; the Raja is further enjoined to cooperate fully with the Emperor's designated agent, Mulukshah, who has been dispatched to Amber.

[At the time of this farman, about nine months had passed since construction first started on the tomb in January 1632. Marble would have been requested well in advance of installation, since the rough stone slabs would still require extensive working after reaching Akbarabad. The earliest inscription inside the tomb is dated 1045/1635-36, and records the completion of the calligraphy on the upper register, so those marble slabs must have been installed well before that date.]

GOD IS GREAT!

*Seal*: ABU'L-MUZAFFAR SHIHAB AL-DIN MUHAMMAD SAHIB-I-QIRAN-SANI, SHAH JAHAN, PADSHAH GHAZI, SON OF NUR AL-DIN JAHANGIR PADSHAH, SON OF AKBAR PADSHAH, SON OF HUMAYUN PADSHAH, SON OF BABUR PADSHAH, SON OF 'UMAR SHAIKH MIRZA, SON OF SULTAN ABU SA'ID, SON OF SULTAN MUHAMMAD MIRZA, SON OF MIRAN SHAH, SON OF AMIR TIMUR SAHIB-I-QIRAN.

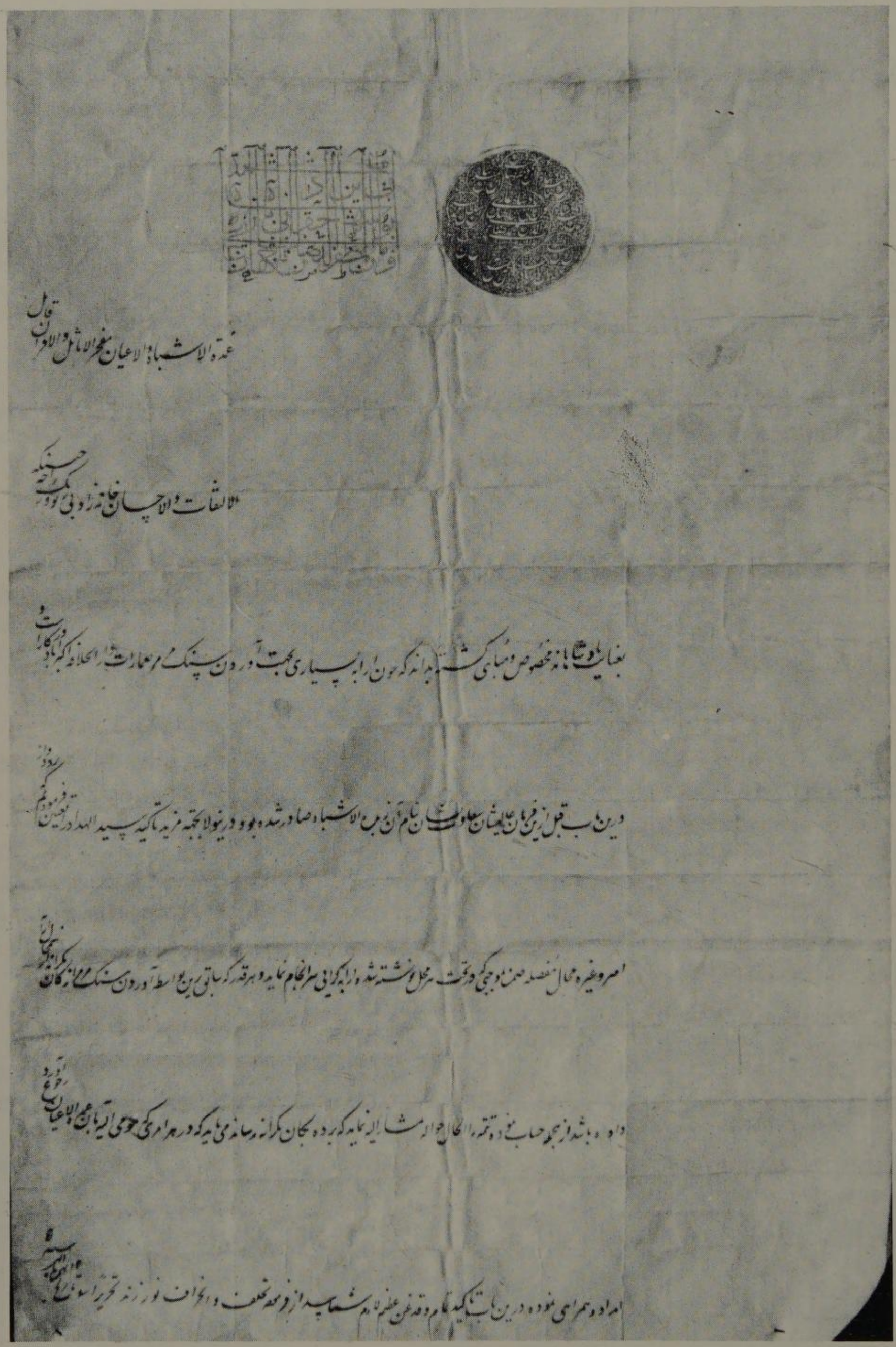
*Tughra*: ROYAL FARMAN OF ABU'L-MUZAFFAR SHIHAB AL-DIN MUHAMMAD SAHIB-I-QIRAN-I-SANI, SHAH JAHAN, PADSHAH GHAZI.

To the best of equals and grandees, the pride of peers and contemporaries, worthy of attention and favors, the sincere, loyal and devoted servant Raja Jai Singh. Having been distinguished and exalted by imperial favors, he should know that we have dispatched Mulukshah to Amber to have white marble brought out from the new quarry (*kan-i-jadid*).

And We hereby order that, whatever the number of stone-cutters (*sang-bur*) and carts-on-hire (*araba-i-kiraya*) for loading the stone that may be required by the aforesaid Mulukshah, the Raja should make them available to him; and the wages of the stone-cutters and the rent-money of the carts, he will provide with funds from the royal treasurer (*tahwildar*). It is imperative that the pride of peers and contemporaries should assist Mulukshah in all ways in this regard; and he should consider this a matter of utmost importance, and not deviate from this order.

Written on the date of 28 Shariwar, Ilahi year five [5 Rabi' I 1042/20 September 1632].

[Bikaner, Rajasthan State Archives, S.N. 27 (old 38).]



86. Farman to Raja Jai Singh, dated 3 February 1633. Bikaner, Rajasthan State Archives.

# 26

# ROYAL FARMAN TO RAJA JAI SINGH, DATED 15 BAHMAN, FIFTH REGNAL YEAR

[This farman is dated 3 February 1633, or less than five months after the preceding document. The Emperor again urges Raja Jai Singh to expedite the shipment of large quantities of marble from the Makrana quarries, here specified as being for the "buildings" (*ba-'imarat-ha*) at Akbarabad. A different agent, Sayyid Ilahdad, has now been appointed to proceed to Amber to arrange for some 230 carts-on-hire from different administrative districts (*mahal*) in the region, as specified in the endorsement on the reverse of the farman. With so many carts transporting marble to Akbarabad at this time, the stonecutters at the site must have already started the installation of the marble slabs on the tomb--a process which the inscriptional evidence indicates had been largely brought to completion by 1635-36, with some work continuing on the interior up to 1638.]

GOD IS GREAT!

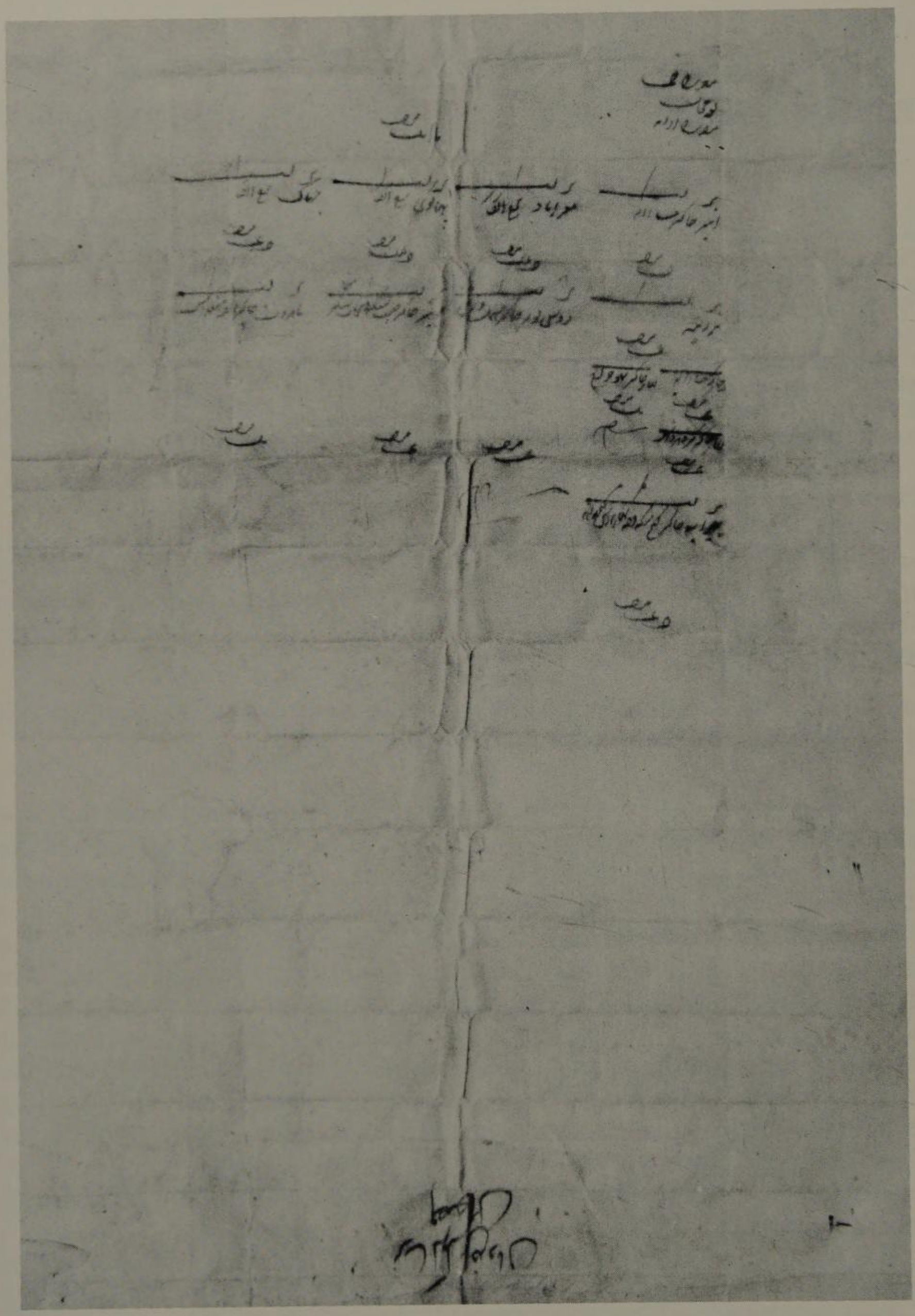
*Seal*: ABU'L-MUZAFFAR SHIHAB AL-DIN MUHAMMAD SAHIB-I-QIRAN-SANI, SHAH JAHAN, PADSHAH GHAZI, SON OF NUR AL-DIN JAHANGIR PADSHAH, SON OF AKBAR PADSHAH, SON OF HUMAYUN PADSHAH, SON OF BABUR PADSHAH, SON OF 'UMAR SHAIKH MIRZA, SON OF SULTAN ABU SA'ID, SON OF SULTAN MUHAMMAD MIRZA, SON OF MIRAN SHAH, SON OF AMIR TIMUR SAHIB-I-QIRAN.

*Tughra*: ROYAL FARMAN OF ABU'L-MUZAFFAR SHIHAB AL-DIN MUHAMMAD SAHIB-I-QIRAN-I-SANI, SHAH JAHAN, PADSHAH GHAZI.

To the best of equals and grandees, the pride of peers and contemporaries, worthy of attention and favors, the sincere, loyal and devoted high-born (*khanazad*) servant Raja Jai Singh. Having been distinguished and exalted by imperial favors, he should know that, since large numbers of carts are required to transport white marble to the buildings (*ba-'imarat-ha*) at the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad, and since before this, an exalted and auspicious imperial order was issued addressed to the cream of equals concerning this, at this juncture, as added emphasis, We have appointed Sayyid Ilahdad to proceed to Amber and other places, as detailed herewith in the endorsement (*dimn*) [on the reverse], and engage the required carts-on-hire (*araba-i-kiraya*), in accordance with the list written under each place (*mahal*). And whatever number of carts the Raja has previously made available from those places for carting the white marble from the Makrana quarry, having adjusted it against the total number, he should make the balance available to the aforesaid [Sayyid Ilahdad], who will escort them to the Makrana quarry.

And it is imperative that, in any matter on which the aforesaid [Sayyid Ilahdad] approaches the best of grandees, the Raja, having accorded him all help and cooperation, should display strict compliance and take all possible care in the matter, and should not disobey or deviate from this order.

Written on the day 15 Bahman, Ilahi year five [23 Rajab 1042/3 February 1633].



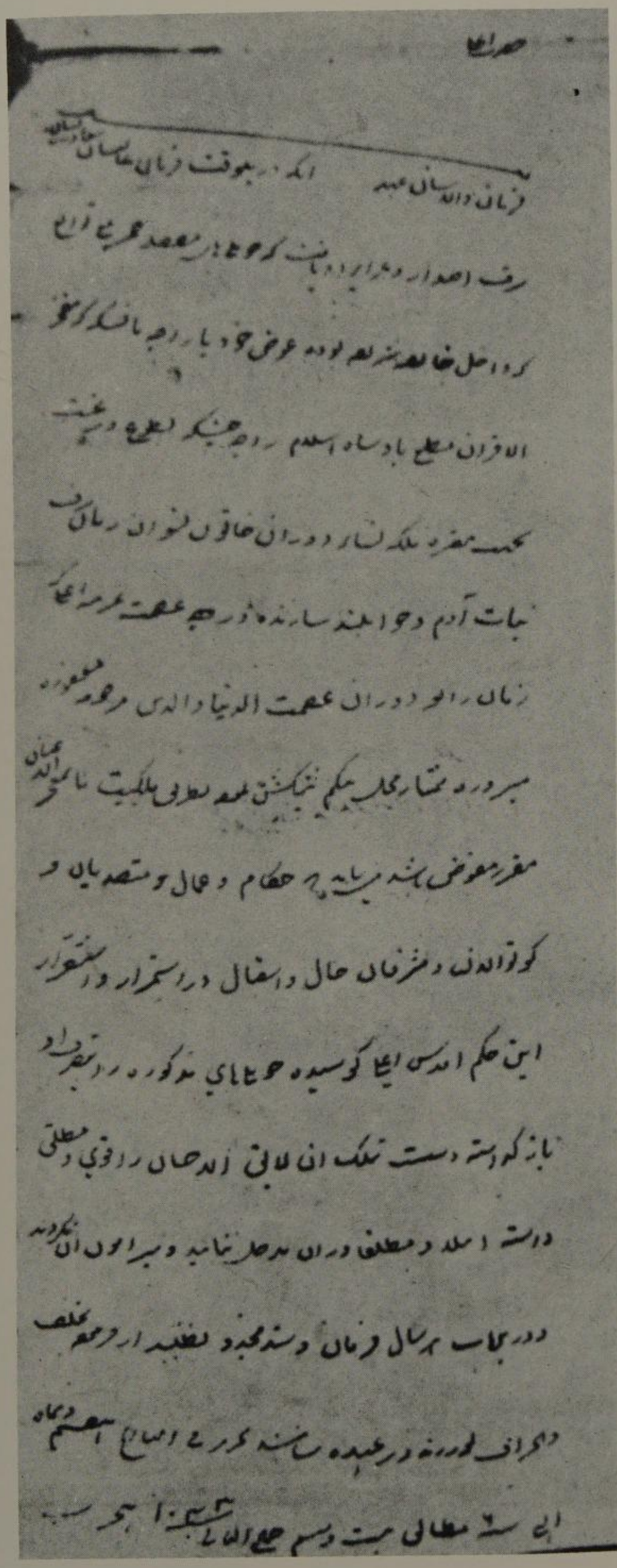
87. Reverse of preceding farman.

*Endorsement on the Reverse of the Farman*

Summary of the endorsement:
Administrative districts (*mahal*) ..... 9
Total number of carts (*araba*) ..... 230

| *Parganas* | *Carts* |
|---|---|
| (1) Amber, estate (*jagir*) of the aforesaid [Raja Jai Singh] | 10 |
| (2) Mu'izzabad, estate of same | 25 |
| (3) Phagui, estate of same | 25 |
| (4) Jhag, estate of same | 25 |
| (5) Naraina | 80 |
| Estate of same ..... 40 | |
| Estate of Bhojraj ..... 30 | |
| Estate of Girdhar Das ..... 10 | |
| (6) Roshanpur, estate of Baitmal | 10 |
| (7) Jobner, estate of Chet Singh | 10 |
| (8) Mahrot, estate of Raja Bethal Das | 30 |
| (9) Parbatsar [?], estate of Gaj Singh, son of Bihari Das Kacchwaha | 15 |

[Bikaner, Rajasthan State Archives, S.N. 35 (old 46).]



88. Copy of farman to Raja Jai Singh, dated 28 December 1633. Jaipur, Kapad Dwara Collection.

# 27

# COPY OF ROYAL FARMAN TO RAJA JAI SINGH, DATED 26 JUMADA II 1043, SIXTH REGNAL YEAR

[This document is a contemporary certified copy of the now missing original farman. Dated 28 December 1633, its purpose is to bestow on Raj Jai Singh the title to four pieces of property in Akbarabad--referred to as "estates" or "mansions" (*haveli*)--in exchange for the *haveli*, formerly belonging to his grandfather Raja Man Singh, which he had voluntarily donated for the construction of the tomb of Mumtaz Mahal.

[The reverse of the document bears transcripts of several attestations, which apparently date two weeks later than the farman draft on the front. The attestations, in accordance with established Mughal bureaucratic procedures, record the comments of several high-ranking officials, who reviewed each farman before its final version was entered in the official record and issued. The four crown properties, or *havelis*, offered to Raja Jai Singh are listed by the names of their presumed former owners: Raja Bhagwandas; Madho Singh; Rupsi Bairagi; and Chand Singh, son of Suraj Singh.

[Raja Jai Singh must have donated his property not long after the death of Mumtaz Mahal--at the latest by December 1631--but apparently Shah Jahan's grant of crown property in exchange took almost two years to be processed. The endorsements on the farman mention that the Raja had earlier received a different crown property, the *haveli* of the late Shahzada Khanam (whose identity is unknown), but it is not stated whether that bequest was also part of the agreed exchange.]

His Exalted Majesty (*Hazrat-i-A'la*)

The copy of the farman is as follows:

Be it known through this glorious farman marked by happiness, which has received the honor of issuance and the dignity of proclamation, that the mansions (*haveli*) detailed in the endorsement (*dimn*), together with their dependencies, which belong to the august crown property, have been offered to that pride of peers and vassal of the monarch of Islam, Raja Jai Singh, and are hereby handed over and transferred to his ownership--in exchange for the mansion (*haveli*), formerly belonging to Raja Man Singh, which that pride of the grandees willingly and voluntarily donated for the mausoleum (*maqbara*) of that Queen of the ladies of the world and Lady of the ladies of the Age, that honor of the daughters of Adam and Eve and upholder of the stature of chastity of the Time, that Rabi'a of the world and chastity of the World and Religion, that recipient of Divine Mercy and Pardon, Mumtaz Mahal Begam.

And it shall be incumbent upon all present and future governors, officials (*amil*), overseers (*mutsaddiyan*), agents and inspectors (*mushrif*), in the implementation and execution of this august lofty order, to hand over to his possession the said mansions, and convey to that one worthy of bounty their absolute ownership. Moreover they should never and by no means bring about any obstruction or deviation, nor should they ever require a fresh farman or deed; and they should neither depart or deviate from this order, nor fail to execute it promptly.

Written on this date, the 7th of the month of Dai, Ilahi year 6, corresponding to the 28th of Jumada II, year 1043 Hijri [28 December 1633].

*Endorsement on Reverse of the Farman*

. . . Sunday, the 28th of the month of Dai, Ilahi year 6, corresponding to the 14th of Rajab, year 1043 [?]

The memoranda (*risala*) of the Pillar of the State (*'Umdat al-Mulk*), the . . . of the government and support of the kingdom, the trust of the great . . . and organizer of the affairs of kingship, the Plenipotentiary of the government (*Jumlat al-Mulk*) and pivot of important affairs (*Madar al-Maham*) [i.e., the Prime Minister], 'Allami Fahami Afzal Khan; and that asylum of ministership of and mainstay of good fortune and glory, Mir Jumla; and that asylum of ministership . . . Makramat Khan; and the holder of the secretariat (*diwani*), the least of the servants, Mir Muhammad:

The ever-obeyed farman, as effulgent as the sun and exalted as the sky, was issued [to the effect that]:

> The mansions (*haveli*), together with their dependencies, belonging to the august crown estate, in exchange for the mansion (*haveli*) belonging to Raja Jai Singh, which that Pillar of the State (*'Umdat al-Mulk*), for the sake of the Illumined Tomb, willingly and voluntarily donated as a gift (*peshkash namudand*), have hereby been granted by us to the said Raja and settled on him in full ownership.

And by way of attestation, this note (*ya'd-dasht*) has been put into writing. And the endorsement (*sharh*) in the handwriting of *Jumlat al-Mulki Madar al-Mahami* [Afzal Khan] is that: "This should be entered in the news-register." Another endorsement in the handwriting of *Jumlat al-Mulki* is that: "The haveli of the late Shahzada Khanam [?] which was granted to the said Raja is confirmed."

The endorsement in the handwriting of that asylum of ministership and mainstay of good fortune and glory, Mir Jumla, is that: "As specified in the memorandum (*ba-risala*) of *Jumlat al-Mulki Madar al-Mahami*, it should be entered in the news-register (*waqi'a*)." The endorsement in the handwriting of that asylum of good fortune and mainstay of glory, Makramat Khan, is that: "It should be entered in the news-register."

The endorsement on the margin (*hashiya*) is in the handwriting of the news-writer (*waqi'a-navis*), attesting its entry in the news-register [?].

Another endorsement in the handwriting of the *Jumlat al-Mulki Madar al Mahami*, 'Allami Fahami, is that: "It should be resubmitted." The endorsement in the handwriting of that favorite of the royal court, Hakim Muhammad Sadiq Khan, is that: "It should be placed again before the august notice on Tuesday."

Another endorsement in the handwriting of that favorite of the royal court, the administrator [?] of the foundations of the Gurgani rule and enforcer [?] of the rules of justice, the model of the lords of high station and choice of the peers of the world, *Jumlat al-Mulki Madar al-Mahami*, 'Allami Fahami Afzal Khan, is that: "A farman of high dignity should be issued."

*List of the Properties*

Four "properties" (*manzil*) have been granted to the Raja:

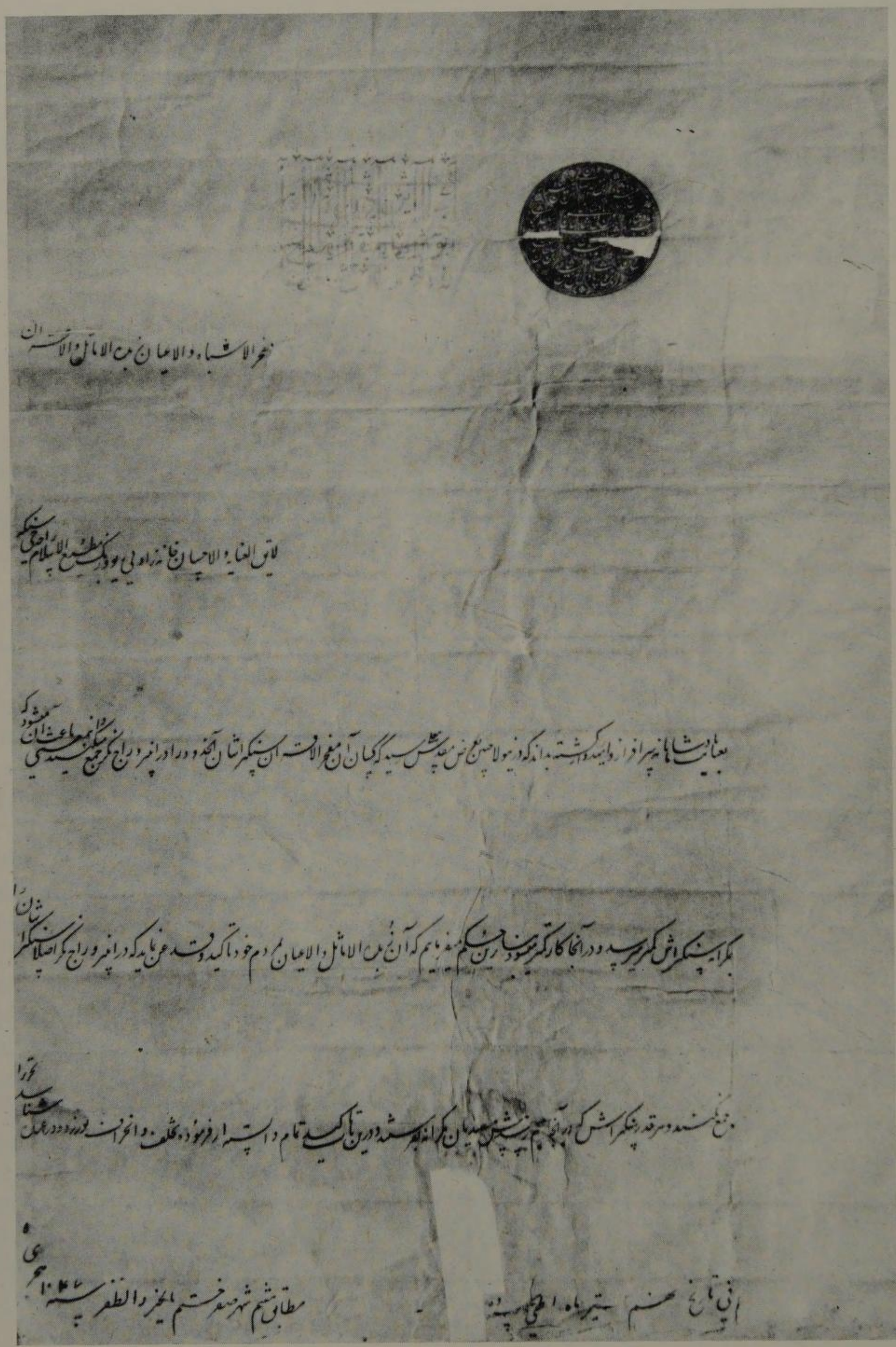
Haveli of Raja Bhagwandas . . .
Haveli of Madho Singh . . .
Haveli of Rupsi Bairagi, in the locality (*mohalla*) of Atga Khan Bazar
Haveli of Chand Singh, son of Suraj Singh, in the aforementioned locality

*Attestation and Seal*

Certified as a true copy of the original:

THE SERVANT OF THE RELIGIOUS CODE OF MUHAMMAD
. . . ABU'L-BARAKAT

[Jaipur, City Palace, Kapad Dwara Collection, K.D. No. 176/R. See: *Descriptive List of Documents in the Kapad Dwara Collection, Jaipur*, National Register of Private Records, No. 1, Part I (Delhi, National Archives of India, 1971); G. N. Bahura and Chandramani Singh, *Catalogue of Historical Documents in Kapad Dwara, Jaipur* (Jaipur, Jaigarh Public Charitable Trust, 1988).]



89. Farman to Raja Jai Singh, dated 30 June 1637. Bikaner, Rajasthan State Archives.

## 28

# ROYAL FARMAN TO RAJA JAI SINGH, DATED 7 SAFAR 1046, TENTH REGNAL YEAR

[This farman contains a stern order to Raja Jai Singh not to allow his own agents to carry on quarrying activities at Makrana that would interfere with the continued shipments of marble, presumably to Akbarabad. From the evidence of the inscription of Amanat Khan dated 1048/1638, it is likely that the final construction work on the tomb's interior was nearing its peak in the period of 1047/1637, and that accordingly a great deal of marble was still required for the tomb proper--not to mention the marble components of the other structures which were presumably also under construction at the same time.]

GOD IS GREAT!

*Seal*: ABU'L-MUZAFFAR SHIHAB AL-DIN MUHAMMAD SAHIB-I-QIRAN-SANI, SHAH JAHAN, PADSHAH GHAZI, SON OF NUR AL-DIN JAHANGIR PADSHAH, SON OF AKBAR PADSHAH, SON OF HUMAYUN PADSHAH, SON OF BABUR PADSHAH, SON OF 'UMAR SHAIKH MIRZA, SON OF SULTAN ABU SA'ID, SON OF SULTAN MUHAMMAD MIRZA, SON OF MIRAN SHAH, SON OF AMIR TIMUR SAHIB-I-QIRAN.

*Tughra*: ROYAL FARMAN OF ABU'L-MUZAFFAR SHIHAB AL-DIN MUHAMMAD SAHIB-I-QIRAN-I-SANI, SHAH JAHAN, PADSHAH GHAZI.

The pride of equals and grandees, the cream of peers and contemporaries, worthy of attention and favors, the sincere, loyal and devoted high-born (*khanazad*) servant, who is submissive to Islam, Raja Jai Singh, having been honored with and hopeful of imperial favors, should know that it has just come to our exalted and august notice that employees of the pride of peers are mustering the stone-cutters of that area in Amber and Rajnagar, with the result that hardly any stone-cutters reach Makrana and consequently less work is being done there.

Therefore, we order that the cream of contemporaries and grandees should strongly impress upon his people that by no means are they to muster stone-cutters at Amber and Rajnagar; and whatever stone-cutters are available should be sent to the royal agents (*mutasaddiyan*) at Makrana. And regarding strict compliance as necessary in this matter, he should not disobey or deviate from this order, and should consider it his responsibility.

Written on this day, the ninth of the month of Tir, Illahi year ten, corresponding to the seventh of the month of Safar--may it end with grace and victory--of the Hijri year 1047 [30 June 1637].

[Bikaner, Rajasthan State Archives, S.N. 35 (old 46).]

فدوی عقیدت سرشت بعد اداے وظائف ارادت و بندگی که سرمایهٔ سعادت ابدیست
فذه مثال بعرض مقدس میرساند که این مرید روز پنجشنبه سیوم محرم مکرم داخل اکبرآباد شده از راه بقصد ملاقات
بادشاهزادهٔ جهانیان بباغ جهان آرا رفت و درآن مکان نزهت نشان فیض صحبت ایشان دریافته
آخر روز بمنزل که در باغ مهابتخان قرار یافته بود آمده و جمعه بطواف روضهٔ منوره رفته برکات زیارت
سراسر طاعت اندوخت، عمارات این خطیرهٔ قدسی اساس بهمه دستور که در حضور پر نور باتمام رسیده،
استوار است، مگر گنبد مرقد مطهر که از جانب شمالی در برشگال از دو جا تراوش می کند و هم چنین چهار پیش
طاق و اکثر شاه نشینان مرتبهٔ دوم و چهار گنبد خورد و چهار صفه شمالی و ته خانهای کرسی هفت ده
درهم کشیده، پشت بام خام پوش گنبد کلان درین فصل از دو سه جا چکیده بود و مرمت شده و در برشگال آینده
تا چه روی دهد گنبدهای مسجد و جماعت خانه نیز در موسم باران می چکد و مرمت کرده اند بنیان می نماید
که اگر فرش پشت بام مرتبهٔ دوم را واکرده ریخته سازند و بالای ریخته بارتفاع نیم گز ته کاری شود
شاید پیش طاق و شاه نشین و گنبدهای خرد باصلاح بیاید، و در تدبیر گنبد گلان بعجز معترف اند،

پیر دستگیر سلامت! این قسم عمارات عالی بنا را طرفه چشم زخمی رسیده اگر پرتو التفات اقدس علاج
دفع آن افتد بجا خواهد بود،

باغ ماهتاب را تمام آب گرفته بود، بنابران از صفا افتاده، عنقریب طراوت تازه خواهد یافت،
حوض متمن و بنگله های اطراف آن پاکیزه و مصفا است، از طغیان آب دریای جون آنچه شنیده شد
جای تعجب است، با فعل و یا بطرف عتیق میل کرده متصل آن میگذرد،

روز شنبه بادشاهزادهٔ جهانیان از منزل خود آورده فردای آن باز دیدن ایشان رفته وداع شد، و
روز مبارک دوشنبه هفتم از آنجا کوچ کرده امروز که هشتم ماه است نزدیک بدهولپور رسیده، انشاء الله

90. Transcript of letter to Shah Jahan from Prince Aurangzeb, dated 9 December 1652.

## 29

# LETTER TO SHAH JAHAN FROM PRINCE AURANGZEB, DATED 8 MUHARRAM 1063, TWENTY-SIXTH REGNAL YEAR

[This letter was written in December 1652, while Aurangzeb was on his way to take charge of the Deccan. In August that year, he had taken leave of Shah Jahan near Kabul, just as the Emperor was departing for Delhi. As Shah Jahan reached Delhi in early December, Aurangzeb's letter must have reached him a few days after it was sent. Neither Aurangzeb nor Shah Jahan had visited the Illumined Tomb for several years; and as some maintenance problems had developed in the interim, the letter's primary purpose seems to call these to the Emperor's attention.

[Specifically, the letter mentions that during the preceding rainy season, extensive leakage had occurred in various parts of the tomb and the adjacent mosque and assembly hall, and that Aurangzeb had discussed possible remedies for the problem with the architects. To resolve the general leaking, the architects proposed laying a new layer of mortar over the flat roof of the tomb; but as yet they had not come up with a remedy for the "leakage" (not "cracking") that had occurred in the large dome over the grave, at two places on the north side.

[According to the official histories, Shah Jahan made a brief excursion to Akbarabad one year later, in December 1653, by which time the maintenance problems must have been resolved.]

### 29.1. *RUQA'AT-I-'ALAMGIRI*

**[II, pp. 78-9]** This faithful and devoted servant, having respectfully tendered his devotion and obedience, which is the warranty deed of perpetual happiness, humbly brings to [His Majesty's] notice that this disciple (*murid*) entered Akbarabad on Thursday, the 3rd of the honored month of Muharram 1063 [4 December 1652], that he went directly to the garden of Jahanara, with the intention of calling on that princess of the people of the world. And having enjoyed the bounty of her company in that pleasant abode, toward the close of the day, he returned to the mansion (*manzil*) situated in the garden of Mahabat Khan. And on Friday, by going to perform the pious circuit (*tawaf*) of the Illumined Tomb, he obtained the blessings of a visit of complete devotion.

The buildings (*'imarat*) of this shrine enclosure (*hazira*) of holy foundation are still firm and strong (*ustwar*), exactly as they were completed under [His Majesty's] illumined presence, except that the dome over the fragrant sepulcher (*marqad*) leaks during the rainy season in two places on the north side. Likewise, the four arched portals (*pishtaq*), several of the recessed alcoves (*shahnashinan*) of the second story (*martaba*), the four small domes, the four northern vestibules (*suffa*) and sub-chambers of the seven-arched plinth (*kursi-i-habtdar*) have become dampened (*dar-nam*). The marble-covered terrace of the large dome has leaked in two or three places during this past rainy season, and has been repaired. Let us see what happens in the coming rainy season. The domes of the mosque and the assembly-hall (*jama'at-khana*) leaked in the rainy season as well, and have also been repaired.

The architects (*bannayan*) are of the opinion that if the floor (*farsh*) of the roof (*pusht-i-bam*) of the second story (*martaba*) is opened up and treated with concrete

تعالیٰ نوعیکہ قبل ازین معروض داشتہ تا سرحد دکن ہیچ مکان عنانِ مسارعت باز نکشیدہ کوچ بکوچ
طے مراحل خواہد نمود،

نیر جہانتابِ خلافت بر مفارقِ عالمیان تابندہ بماناد،

ع آداب بندگی ش سعادت مندی س آمدہ ع اطاعت
ع "چہار" محذوف س شاہ شہنشاہ ب چہارگنبد و خوار چہار، س صیغہ اب صفحہ،
ب و نیم ع رودہ، ع مسجد جامعت، م "تو" محذوف ع سلان ع گلان "محذوف
ع مانده م چون ع عیش م تابان باد

grout (*rekhta*), and above the concrete, a half-yard (*gaz*) layer (*tahkari*) [of mortar?] is placed, the portal, the gallery and the smaller domes will probably be rectified [i.e., made water-tight]. But they acknowledge their inability [to suggest any remedy] in setting in order the large dome

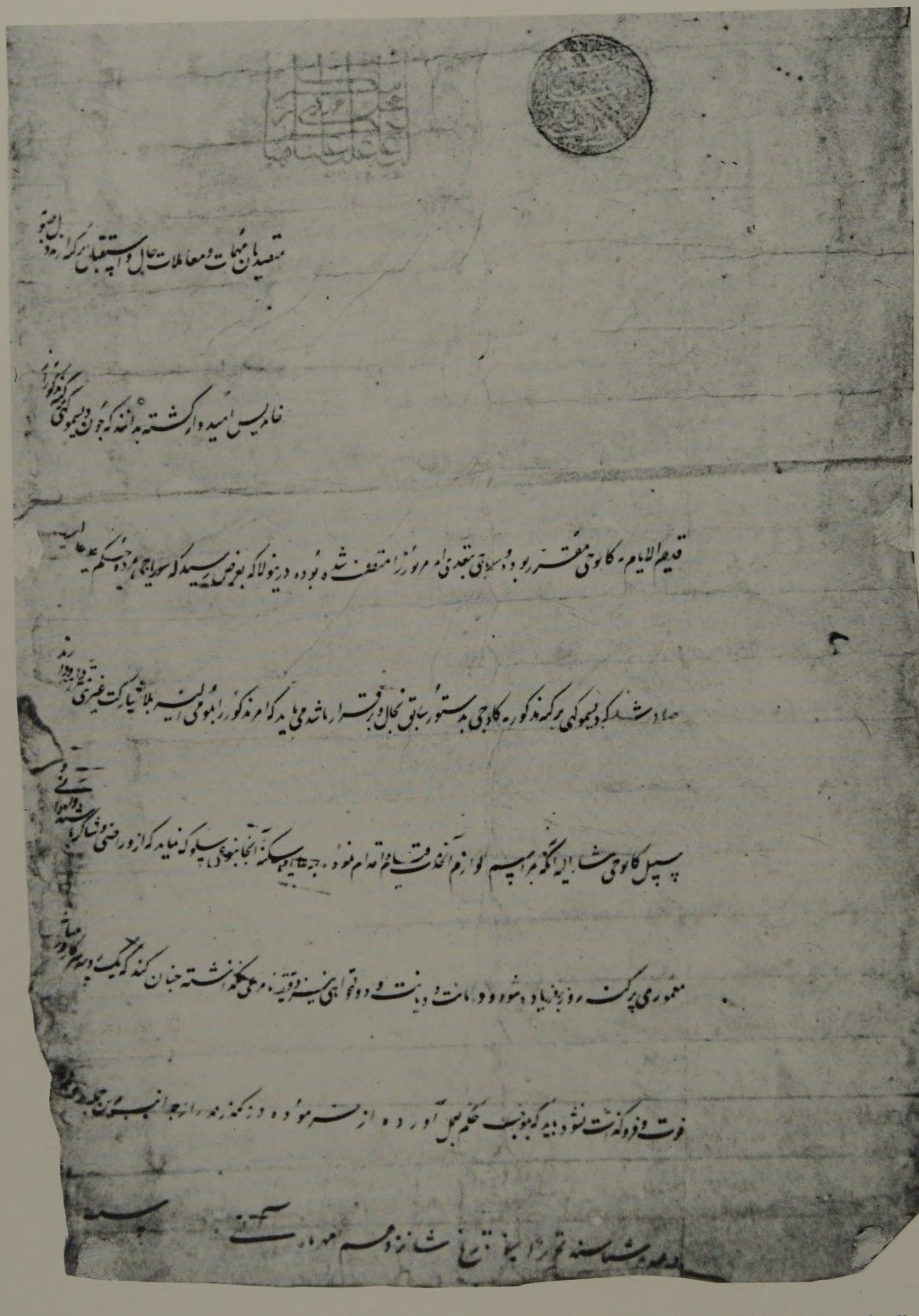
Long-living protector! An extraordinary misfortune [lit., evil-eye] has struck this model of lofty buildings. If the rays of your august attention fall on the remedy to ward it off, it will be proper.

[During the rainy season,] water had completely submerged the Mahtab garden. Consequently, it has lost its tidiness; in the near future, it will attain renewed freshness. The octagonal tank (*hauz-i-musamman*) and the bungalows all around it are pristine (*pakizah*) and unaffected (*musaffa*); and from what had been heard of the floods of the waters of the Jumna, that is surprising! At present, the river has receded and now flows adjacent to it.

On Tuesday, I brought the princess of the people of the world to my lodgings, and went again to see her the next day to bid farewell. And on the auspicious Monday, the 7th, having marched from that place, today, which is the 8th of the month [of Muharram 1063/9 December 1652], I have reached the neighborhood of Dholpur. If Almighty God wills, as has been submitted before this, without restraining the reins of speed at any place before reaching the borders of the Deccan, I shall continue to traverse the stages, march by march.

May the world-illuminating Sun of the Caliphate remain shining upon the heads of the people of the world!

[Text published in S.A.N. Nadvi, ed., *Ruqa'at-i-'Alamgir*, 2 vols. (Azamgarh, 1930).]



91. Order (*hukm*) of Queen Mumtaz Mahal, dated 5 October 1628. Dhulia, Rajwade Samshodhan Mandala.

## 30

# HUKM OF QUEEN MUMTAZ MAHAL, DATED 16 MIHR, FIRST REGNAL YEAR

[Although not directly related to the Taj Mahal, this and the following document are included here for the light they shed upon the power and prestige enjoyed by both Mumtaz Mahal and Princess Jahanara. The present order (*hukm*) directs the government officials of Khandesh to restore a certain person named Kanoji to his former position as "civil administrator" (*deshmukh*) of the town of Erandol in place of Suryaji, who had assumed it forcibly and without authorization. The document is here dated to October 1628, about seven months after Shah Jahan's accession to the throne on 14 February 1628. The digit for the year has been inadvertently omitted by the scribe, but according to Dr. Momin Mohiuddin, the seal on the reverse clearly gives the first regnal year.]

GOD IS GREAT!

*Seal*: IN THIS WORLD, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, MUMTAZ MAHAL
BECAME COMPANION OF THE SHADOW OF GOD, SHAH JAHAN.

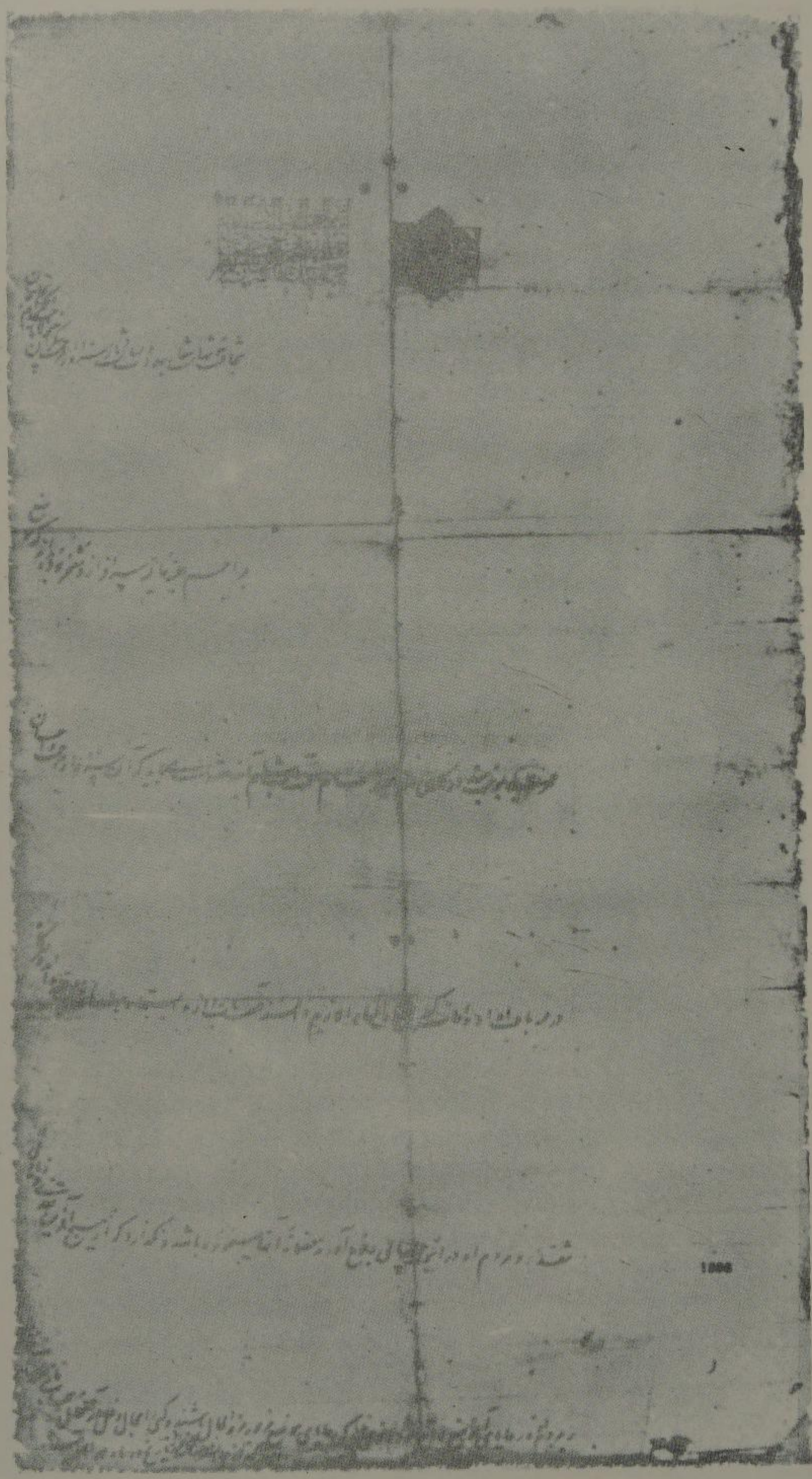
*Tughra*: THE DECREE OF HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN (*MAHD 'ULYA*), MUMTAZ MAHAL BEGAM.

Be it known to the future and present officers (*mutasaddiyan*) of the important affairs of the *pargana* of Erandol, in the province of Khandesh, who are hopeful of royal favors, that, since the civil administration (*deshmukhi*) of the aforesaid *pargana* had been assigned to Kanoji for a long time, and since it has now come to our exalted notice that Suryaji, who had usurped this office from him by force, has expired, this decree (*hukm*) of Her Exalted Majesty is being issued to this effect:

The civil administration of the said *pargana* is to be restored to and confirmed in favor of Kanaji in the same manner as before. [The officials] are obliged to treat the said assignment as conferred upon and attached to the aforesaid without any encumbrance of partnership. It shall be the duty of the said Kanoji to adhere to the prescribed rules and regulations of His Majesty; to treat the peasants and inhabitants in such a manner that they should be satisfied and grateful to him, causing the population and cultivation of the *pargana* to increase daily; constantly to practice sincerity, honesty, and goodwill [toward the population]; and to insure that not a single rupee of government revenue should be lost or wasted.

It is incumbent [upon the officials] to obey this decree, paying strict attention to their compliance, and not to deviate from what is commanded. Written on the 16th of the month of Mihr, Ilahi year [one] [6 Safar 1038/5 October 1628].

[Dhulia, Rajwade Samshodhan Mandala, Kanoji Archives, No. 1. See S.A.I. Tirmizi, *Edicts from the Mughal Harem* (Delhi, 1979), pp. 56-7.]



92. **Order (*nishan*) of Princess Jahanara, dated 10 October 1631. Calcutta, Victoria memorial Hall.**

## 31

# NISHAN OF PRINCESS JAHANARA, DATED 19 MIHR, FIFTH REGNAL YEAR

[Following the death of Mumtaz Mahal, Princess Jahanara, despite her youth, was assigned virtually the same high rank, duties and privileges formerly enjoyed by her late mother. The present order (*nishan*) was issued in October 1632, less than a year and a half after the Queen's death, and shortly after Jahanara's eighteenth solar birthday. Interestingly, the order is addressed to Nijabat Khan, the same young high-born noble that certain contemporary European travel accounts claim was Jahanara's lover--and the man she supposedly would have married, except for the prohibition of her father, the Emperor.]

GOD IS GREAT!

*Seal*: [Illegible]

*Tughra*: THE NISHAN OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS JAHANARA BEGAM, DAUGHTER OF HIS MAJESTY SHAH JAHAN, PADSHAH GHAZI, SAHIB-I-QIRAN-I-SANI.

Be it known to the bold and brave, valorous and valiant, worthy of limitless favors and eminent among exalted nobles, Nijabat Khan, who has been honored and glorified by Her Highness's sublime favors, that the locality (*mauza*) of Umrauli has been conferred upon the chaste Shaham Ara as a gift (*in'am*), by virtue of a royal decree (*sanad*).

And it is incumbent upon that one worthy of favors and bounties to consider it obligatory to render help and assistance to the people of the aforesaid Lady in all matters, regarding her as one of the dependents and servants of Her Highness; and whenever her revenue collector (*shiqdar*) and agents may wait upon him, in case of straitened circumstances, he should give due attention and help, and see that no one is allowed to perpetrate injustices or excesses upon her men or the peasants of that locality. He should, moreover, take such steps as may be necessary to promote the prosperity of the inhabitants of the said locality, and none should be bold to interfere in their affairs. And this order should be considered obligatory, and all strict compliance should be taken in the matter.

Written on the 19th of the month of Mihr, Ilahi year 5 [25 Rabi' I 1042/10 October 1631].

[Calcutta, Victoria Memorial Museum, A. No. 1896. See S.A.I. Tirmizi, *Edicts from the Mughal Harem* (Delhi, 1979), pp. 82-83.]

هوالله

الحمد لله الذی وفق عباده الاعزاز الباقیات الصالحات والصلوٰة

والسلام علی رسوله محمد الذی رغبت البرایا فی انفاق الطیبات و

علی اله واصحابه معدن الخیرات ومنابع الحسنات مادام الارض

والسموٰت اما بعد این ذکریست دربیان آنکه وقف کرد وتصدق

نمود نیازمند درگاه صمدی مسمی حکیم علم الدین المخاطب وزیر خان

بن شیخ عبداللطیف بن شیخ حسام الدین انصاری از خالص املاک والصیب

اموال خود فی حال الصحة وکمال العقل ونفاذ جمیع تصرفاته طائعاً

هنگی مسجد جامع بجمیع توابع ومرافق سه عشره آن وبرای دوام این بقعه

شریفه وقف کرد بر مصالح مسجد مذکور خود تمام دکاکین دورسته معه بالاخانها

وکنرها دسرائے کلان وحمام ودو چاه چرخ وچند قطعه زمین متفرقه که هریک

ازین امکنه مذکوره معلومة الحدود وظاهر علامات است واقع اندرون وبیرون

لاهور وقفاً صحیحاً لازماً بتلة لا یباع ولا یوهب ولا

یرهن ولا یمس ولا یورث ولا یملك بوجهٍ من الوجوه وسبب

من الاسباب الی ان یرث الله الارض ومن علیها وهو خیر الوارثین وجعل

اخر الوقف علی الفقراء المسلمین وشرط کرد این وقف مذکور که

وارونگی وتصرف در اوقاف مذکور در عزل ونصب خدمه مسجد وغیره وتقسیم وتعین

مصارف وازدیاد وآن واعطاء وحرمان ازان نشست برخاست اهل کرایه

دکاکین بدست خود واقف مذکور بالاستقلال مادام حیوته باشد وبعد از وبدست

ولد صلبی محمد سعید خان بعد او به میرزا محمد انور وبعد او بارشد ذکور اولاد او

اولاد اولاد او بطناً بعد بطن ونسلاً بعد نسل الی ماتوالدوا تناسلوا واگر احدی از اولاد او

نباشد به یکی از ذکور اقارب او کذلک وشرط کرد نیز امام خطیب مسجد مذکور یک

کس باشد اقرء واعلم باحکام الصلوة ومؤذن عالم وقات ونیز شرط کرد بیست قطعه دکاکین بیرون

دروازه شرقی وبالاخانهاء آنها محض برائے نشستن صحافان کتب اسلامیه بی کرایه باشد

علی سبیل الدوام ونیز شرط کرد که در مسجد مذکور برائے تعلیم علوم دینیه مدرس باشند سبیل

اهل خدمات از محصول عمله اوقاف مذکوره انکه - امام خطیب را یومیه از یکروپیه تا ده روپیه

ومؤذن را چهار آنه یومیه هریک مدرس را یکروپیه - وهرکه از اولاد واقف متصرف وقف مذکور

باشد در هرماه ششم حصه از محصول کرایه اوقاف گیرد وهرکسے از اقربا باشد نهم حصه گیرد وکذلک

وما بقیه از خرچ عمارت واهل خدمه ومصالح ضروریه دیگر کالمشرف والوقاد والفراش

یصرف علی المستحقین فی السجد وعند التعیین یصرف علی الخدمة کما هو الحکم

فی المذهب الحنفی کل ذلک قد شرط الواقف فمن بدله بعد ما سمعه فانما

اثمه علی الذین یبدلونه فقد حکم بلزوم الوقف المذکور وشرط القائم

النافذ الاحکام الذی زین هذا الوثیقة

بخاتمة المبارك

تحریراً فی غرة شهر رمضان المبارك الواقع فی سنة ۱۰۵۱ھ

93. Transcript of endowment document for mosque of Wazir Khan, Lahore, dated 12 April 1641.

## 32

# TRANSCRIPT OF WAQF DOCUMENT FOR WAZIR KHAN'S MOSQUE AT LAHORE, DATED 1 RAMAZAN 1051

[Wazir Khan was for many years one of Shah Jahan's most trusted and honored nobles. Along with Prince Shah Shuja' and Satti al-Nisa Khanam, he was appointed to escort the body of Mumtaz Mahal to Agra, some six months after her death. However, most of his career was spent as governor of Panjab, where he built numerous buildings, including the large congregational mosque (*masjid-i-jami'*) in Lahore. The present document, dated 12 April 1641, is Wazir's Khan's deed of endowment (*waqf*) for the mosque, which had been completed some six years earlier in 1044/1634-35. Unfortunately, Shah Jahan's deed of endowment for the Taj Mahal has been lost, but certain of its provisions must have been similar to those given in Wazir Khan's endowment--which coincidentally went into effect just as the entire Taj complex was nearing final completion.]

HE IS GOD!

*Praise be to God who guides His servants to honor religious edifices; and benedictions and salutations to Muhammad, His Prophet, who persuaded people to spend money on charitable objects, and to his descendants and companions, the mine of virtues and good deeds, so long as there is duration to earth and skies!*

Be it known that this document is to declare that the supplicator at the court of Eternal Law, named Hakim 'Alim al-Din, and entitled Wazir Khan, the son of Shaikh 'Abd al-Latif, son of Husam al-Din Ansari, *while in full possession of his health and senses*, out of property exclusively owned and fairly earned by him, has herewith endowed to pious uses the congregational mosque [situated in the city of Lahore], with all its lawful adjuncts and appurtenances.

And for the maintenance of this noble edifice, he has endowed for its expenses all the shops situated on both sides of the road, together with the upper stories, habitable quarters, the large sarai, hammam, two wells worked with Persian wheels, and several scattered plots of ground, each of these properties having known boundaries and manifest marks.

*And this endowment is valid, binding, certain and imperative, not subject to sale, mortgage or dower; it is not inheritable and, under no circumstance or cause, is it to become the property of anyone, until the day when God shall assume heritage of all lands--"For He is the best of inheritors"--and this is his final bequest on behalf of needy Muslims.*

And the conditions in regard to the aforesaid endowment are these: The control and charge of the endowments, the power of dismissal and appointment of the servants of the mosque and so forth, the disbursement and the apportionment of expenses, and the increasing, granting or withdrawal of these, the leasing and eviction of tenants of the shops, shall permanently remain in the hands of the bequeather himself, so long as he lives.

And after him, the power shall rest with his real son, Muhammad Sa'id Khan; and after him, it shall rest with Mirza Muhammad Anwar; and after him, with the ablest

of his male descendants, and the descendant of that descendant, generation after generation, so long as they continue to produce offspring. Should none be left of his male descendants, then the power shall rest with the nearest of his male relatives, in the order already mentioned.

Further, it is provided that the Imam-preacher attached to the mosque will be a person thoroughly skilled in the art of reading the Qur'an, and familiar with the rules of prayer; and the muezzin must be thoroughly familiar with the death ceremonies.

Further, it is stipulated that twenty shops outside the eastern gateway, together with their upper stories, shall be for the exclusive use of the bookbinders and book-sellers of the books on Islam, free of rent in perpetuity.

Further, it is covenanted that there shall be two teachers for the said mosque, for the purpose of giving instruction in religious sciences.

The following are the provisions regarding the remuneration of the establishment attached to the endowment: The Imam-preacher is to receive from one rupee to ten rupees per day; the muezzin four annas per day; and each teacher one rupee per day.

And any of the descendants of the bequeather who assumes charge of the aforesaid endowment shall receive each month one-sixth of the income of the endowed property; and any of his near relations who may be in charge shall receive a one-ninth share of the same, and so on [the share shall decrease according to the remoteness of consanguinity].

And whatever shall remain after defraying the expenses of the building, the servants of the mosque and other necessary expenses, *such as providing for the overseer, the carrier of firewood* [for the baths], *the carpet-spreader and other rightful persons attached to the mosque, shall be spent in maintaining the guests who come to the mosque; and a fixed amount shall be spent on such services in accordance to the rules of the Hanafi school.*

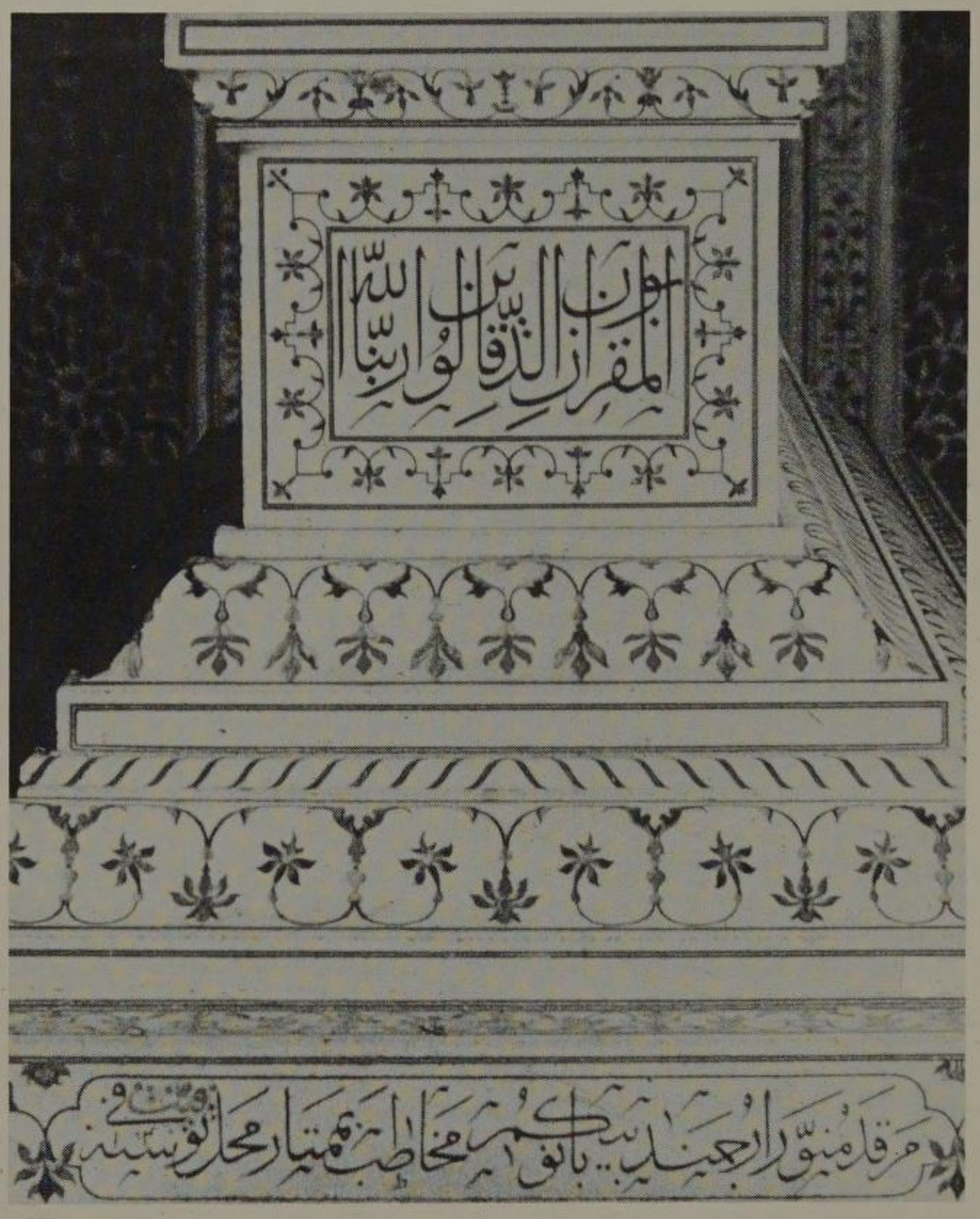
*And the above rules have been framed by the bequeather himself. "And whoever attempts to make a change in them after he has once heard them shall be deemed a transgressor." This endowment has binding force; and whatever is written herein has been attested as binding by the Qazi of the time, who has adorned this document with his august seal in confirmation of the same.*

*Written on this first day of the blessed Ramazan, in the year 1051 Hijri* [12 April 1641].

[Text published in S.M. Latif, *Lahore, Its History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities* (Lahore, 1956; reprint of 1892 ed.), 218-21.]

# PART III

# THE INSCRIPTIONS ON THE TAJ MAHAL



94. Epitaph of Mumtaz Mahal on upper cenotaph.

95. Epitaph of Mumtaz Mahal on lower cenotaph.

# 33

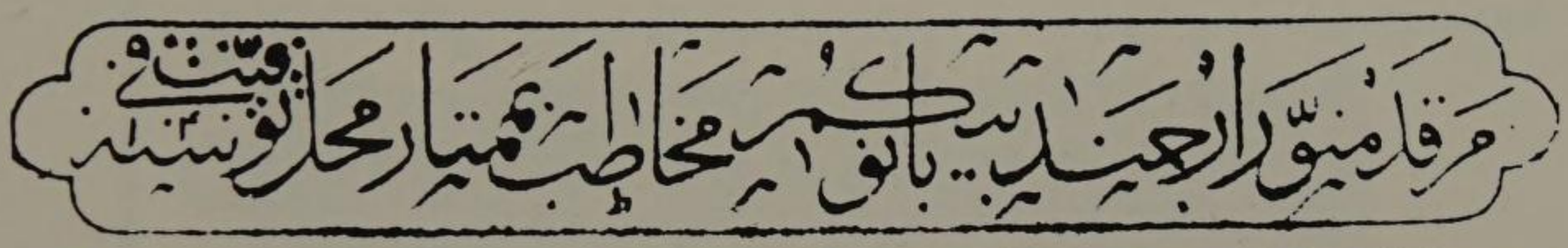
# THE HISTORICAL INSCRIPTIONS

[Leaving aside the epitaphs, which merely record the dates of death of Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan, the earliest dated inscription on the tomb proper clearly establishes that the upper marble revetments inside the domed hall were in place by 1045/1635-36, or less than four years after construction began in January 1632. One year later, according to the evidence of the inscription on the west grilled door, dated 1046/1636-37, the exterior marble walls, at least on the west side, must also have been installed. The last inscription inside the tomb, dated 1048/1638-39, documents the completion of the rest of the interior hall--and presumably of the entire tomb proper.

[It should be noted that the gateway inscription, dated 1057/1647-48, conflicts with statements in the histories that the entire tomb complex had "recently" been completed in the sixteenth regnal year, when Shah Jahan observed the twelfth 'Urs there in Zi'l-Qa'da 1052/February 1643. Clearly, however, the gateway calligraphy, at least on the north arch, was added later than the sixteenth year.]

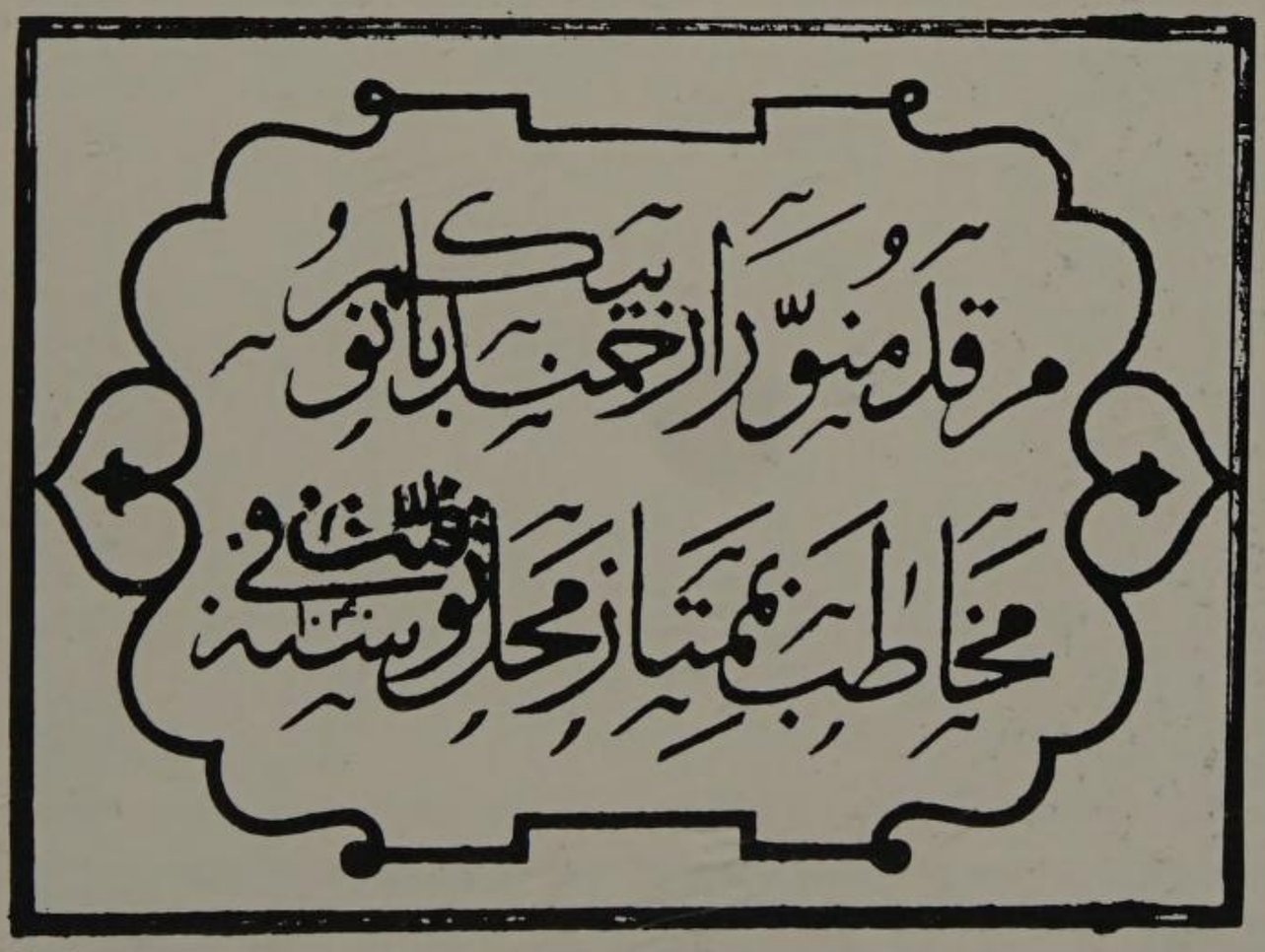
*Epitaphs on Cenotaphs of Mumtaz Mahal*

**1.** [CENOTAPH IN UPPER HALL: lower molding of cenotaph, at southern end, or foot]:



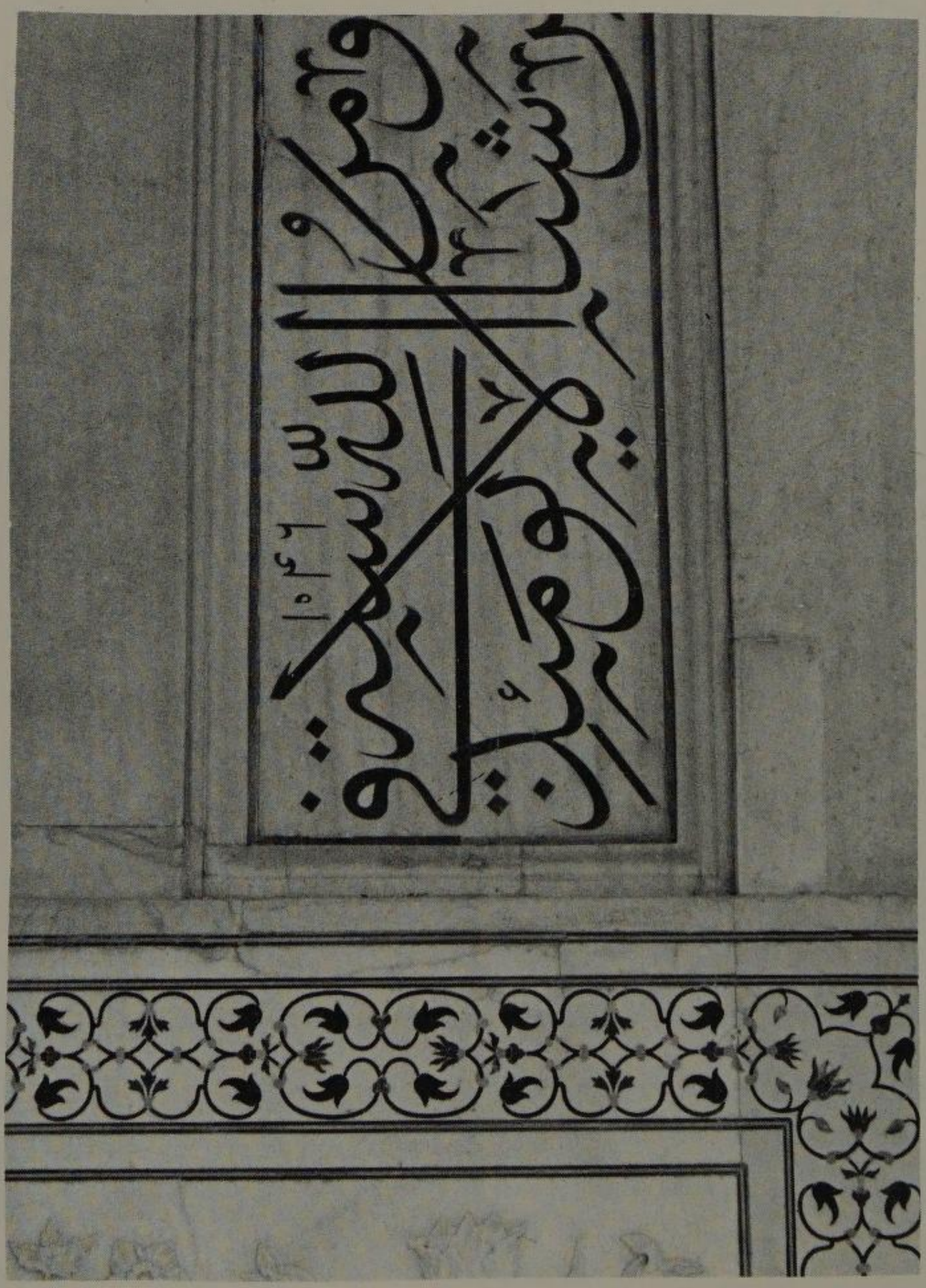
"The illumined grave of Arjumand Bano Begam, entitled Mumtaz Mahal, who died in the year 1040" [17 Zi'l-Qa'da 1040/17 June 1631].

**2.** [CENOTAPH IN CRYPT: dado panel of cenotaph, at southern end, or foot]:



"The illumined grave of Arjumand Bano Begam, entitled Mumtaz Mahal, who died in the year 1040" [17 Zi'l-Qa'da 1040/17 June 1631].

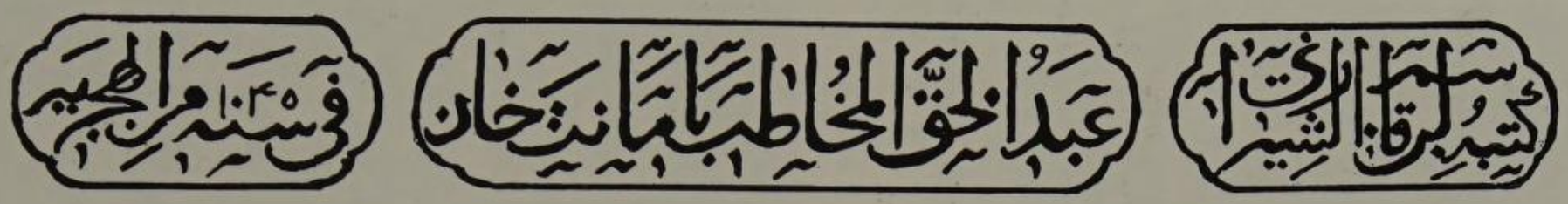
96. Signature of Amanat Khan inside tomb, above south arch, dated 1045/1635-36.



97. Colophon on exterior west grilled door, dated 1046/1636-37.

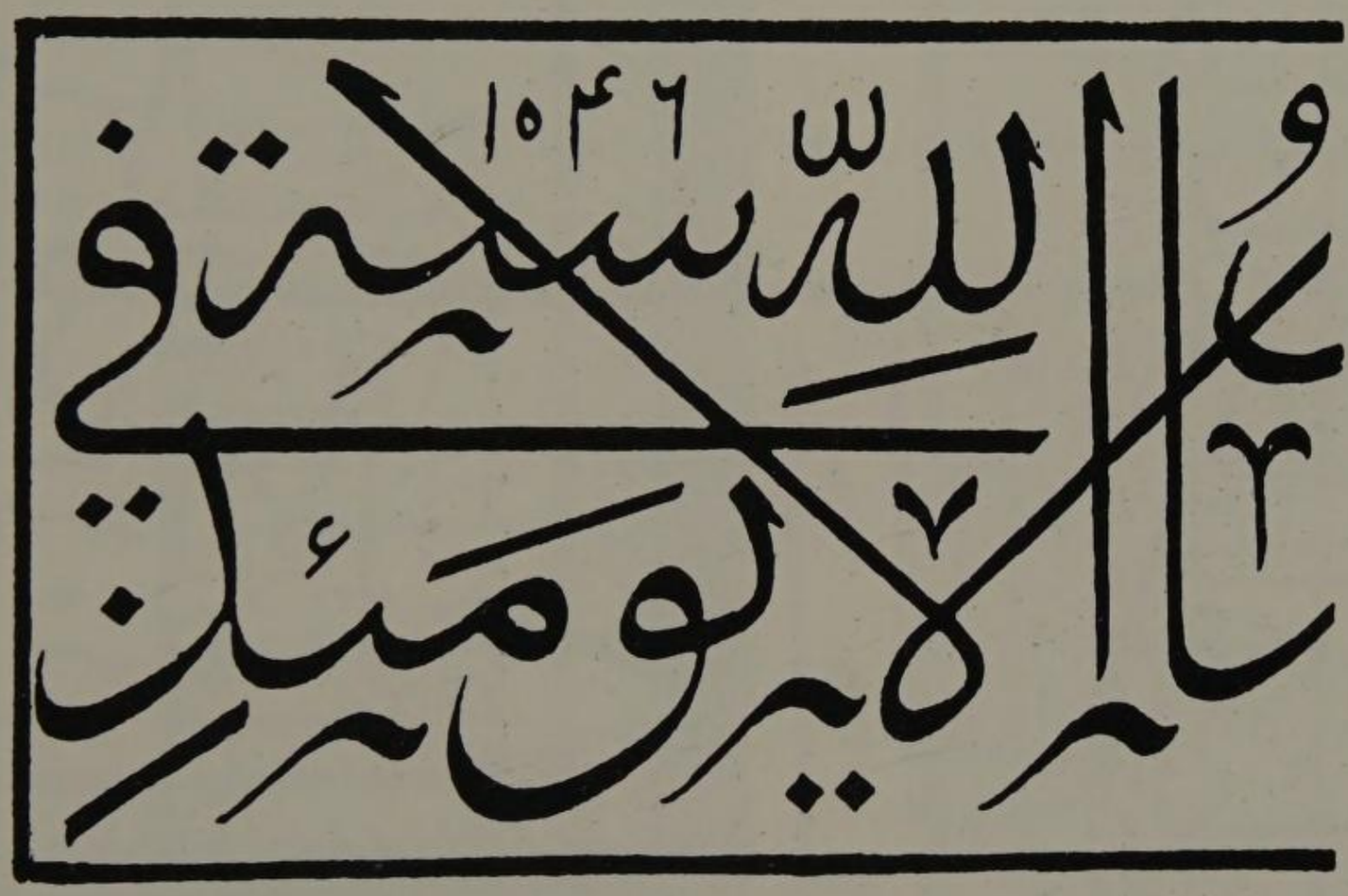
*Dated Colophons*

**3.** [COLOPHON OF AMANAT KHAN, INTERIOR OF TOMB: South Arch, left end of upper register, three small cartouches toward end of Qur'anic Inscription No. 10 (Sura 67.24)]:

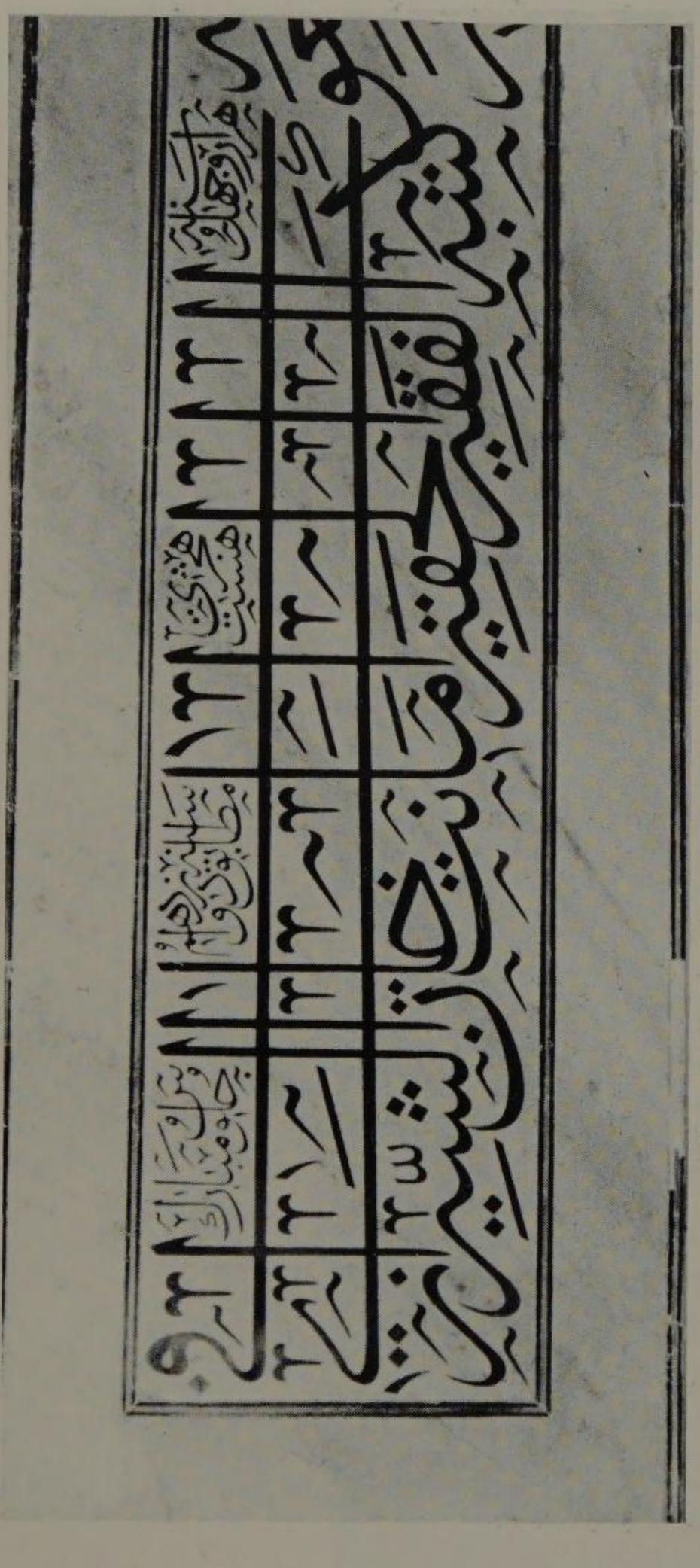


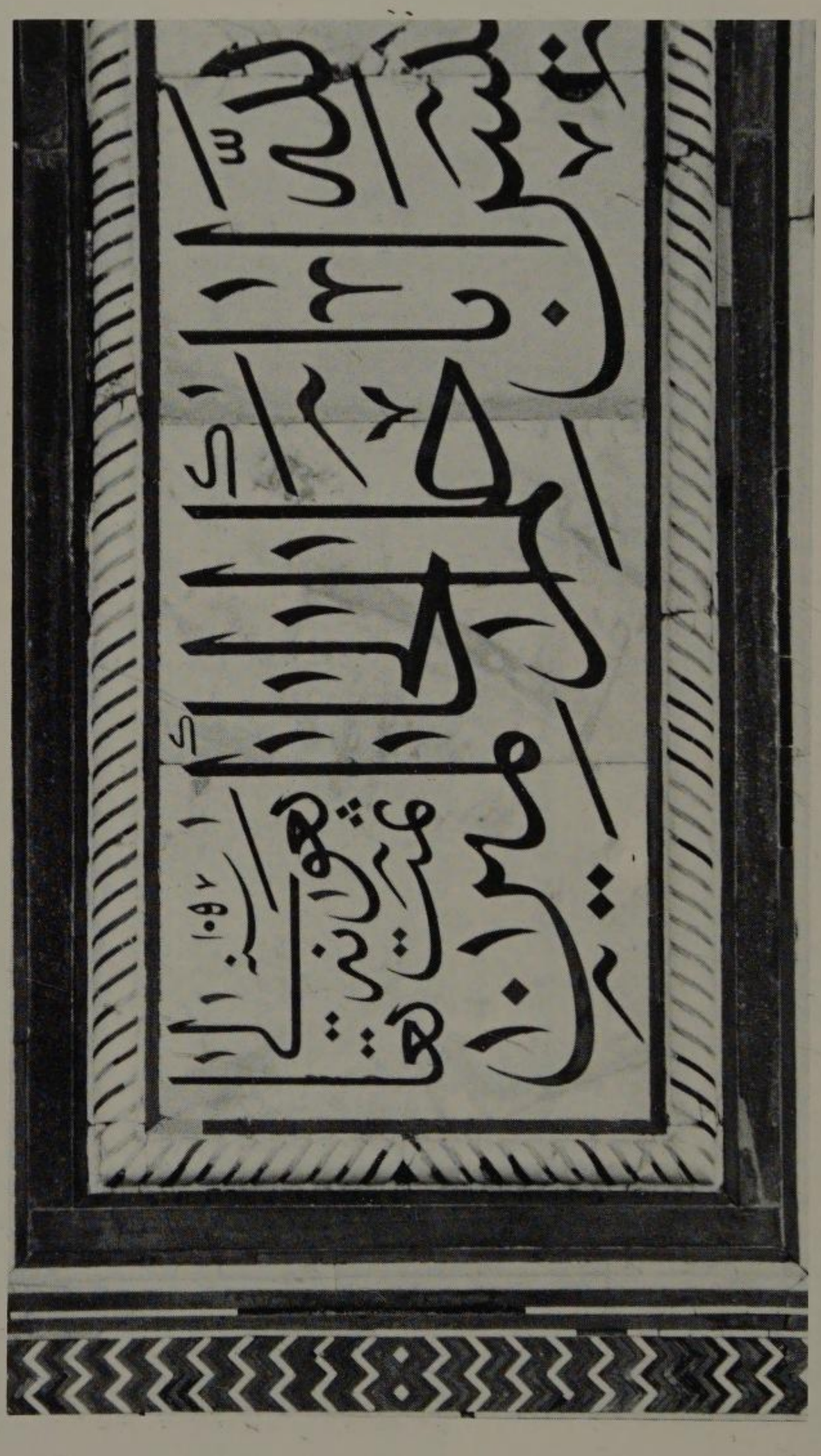

"Written by the son of Qasim al-Shirazi ... 'Abd al-Haqq, entitled Amanat Khan ... in the year 1045 Hijri" [1635-36].

**4.** [UNSIGNED COLOPHON, EXTERIOR OF TOMB: West Portal, bottom left side of arch, at end of Qur'anic Inscription No. 7 (Sura 82)]:




"In the year 1046" [1636-37].

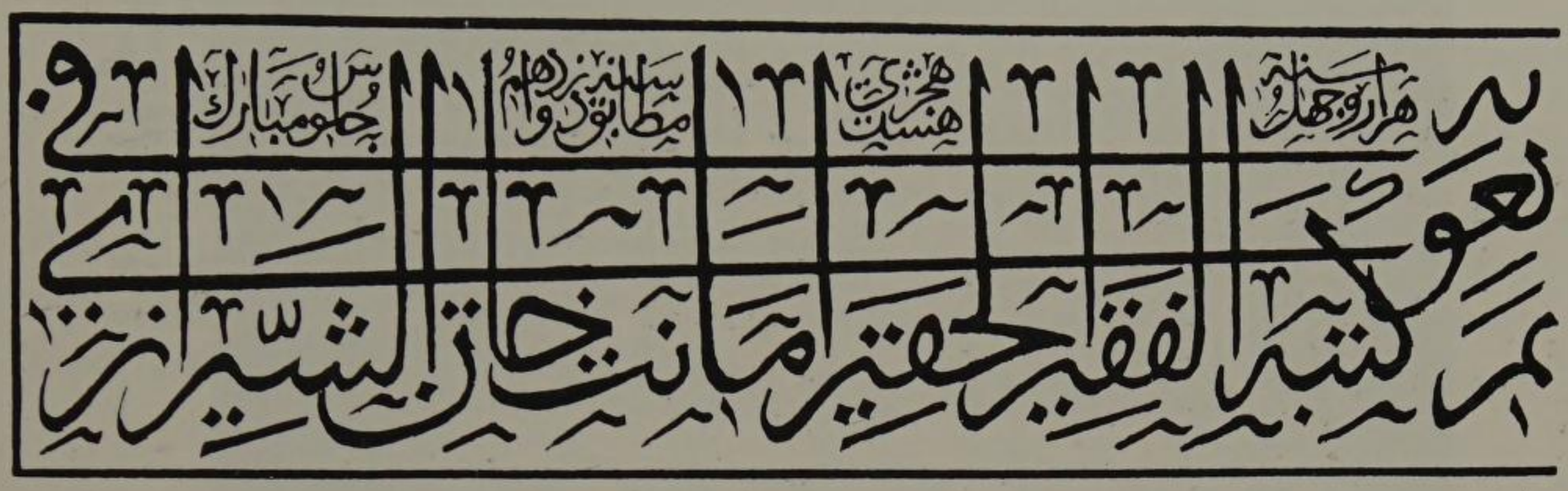




98. Signature of Amanat Khan inside tomb, south arch, dated 1048/1638-39.

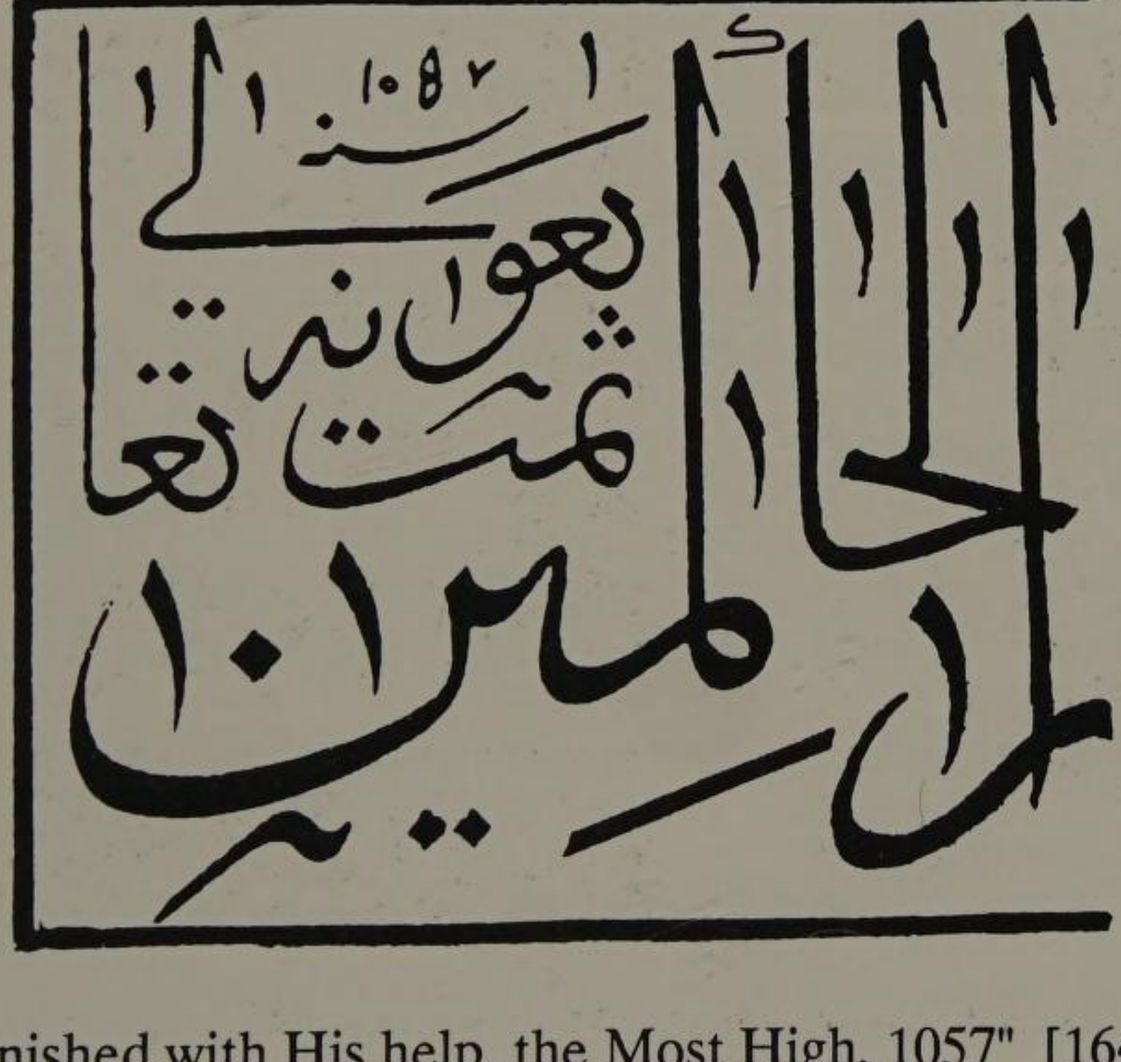
99. Colophon on gateway, bottom left of north arch, dated 1057/1647-48.

**5.** [COLOPHON OF AMANAT KHAN, INTERIOR OF TOMB: South Arch, bottom right side, at end of Qur'anic Inscription No. 13 (Sura 39.53-54)]:

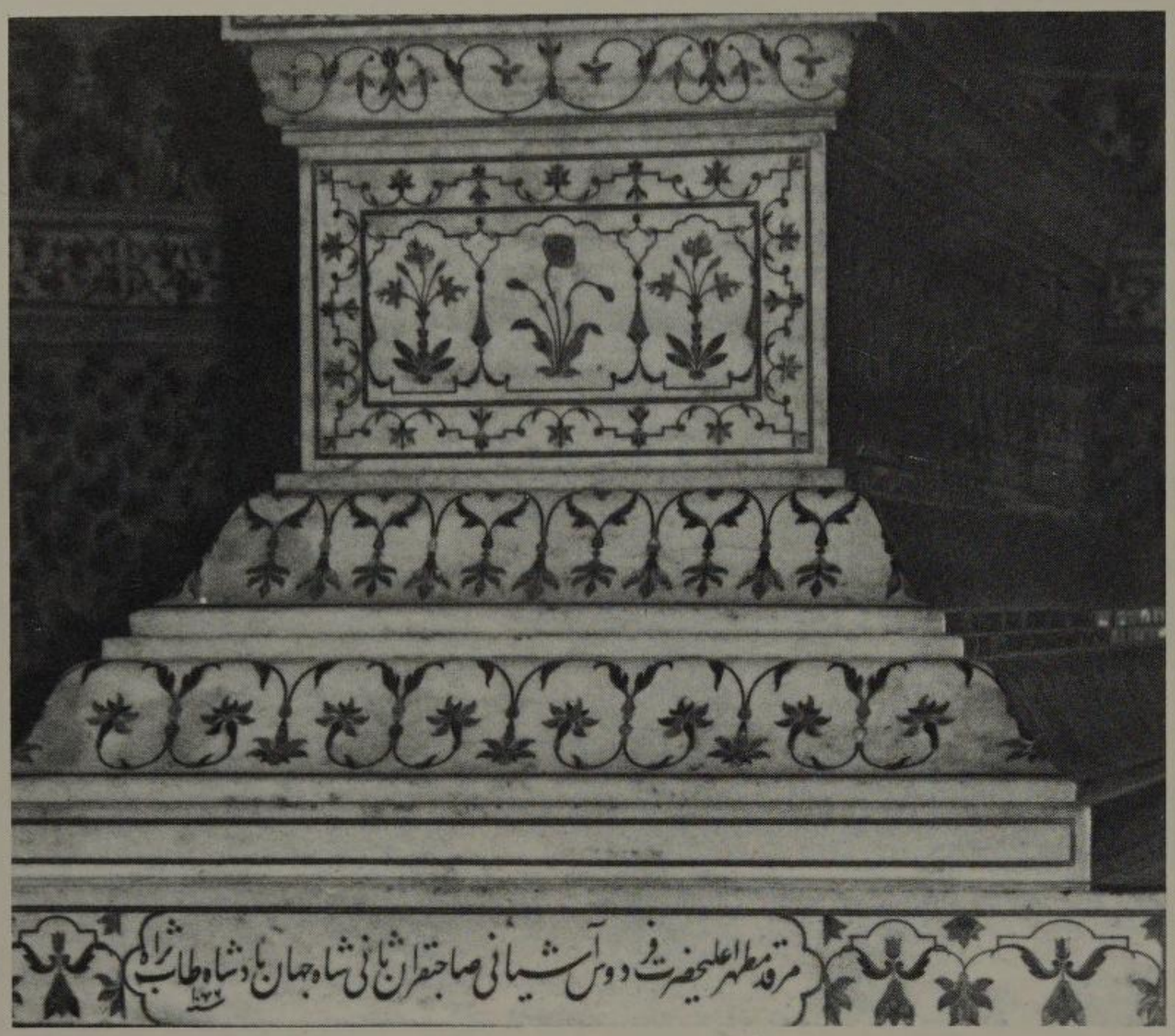


"Finished with His help; written by the humble *faqir* Amanat Khan al-Shirazi, in the year one-thousand-and-forty-eight Hijri, and the twelfth of His Majesty's august accession" [1638-39].

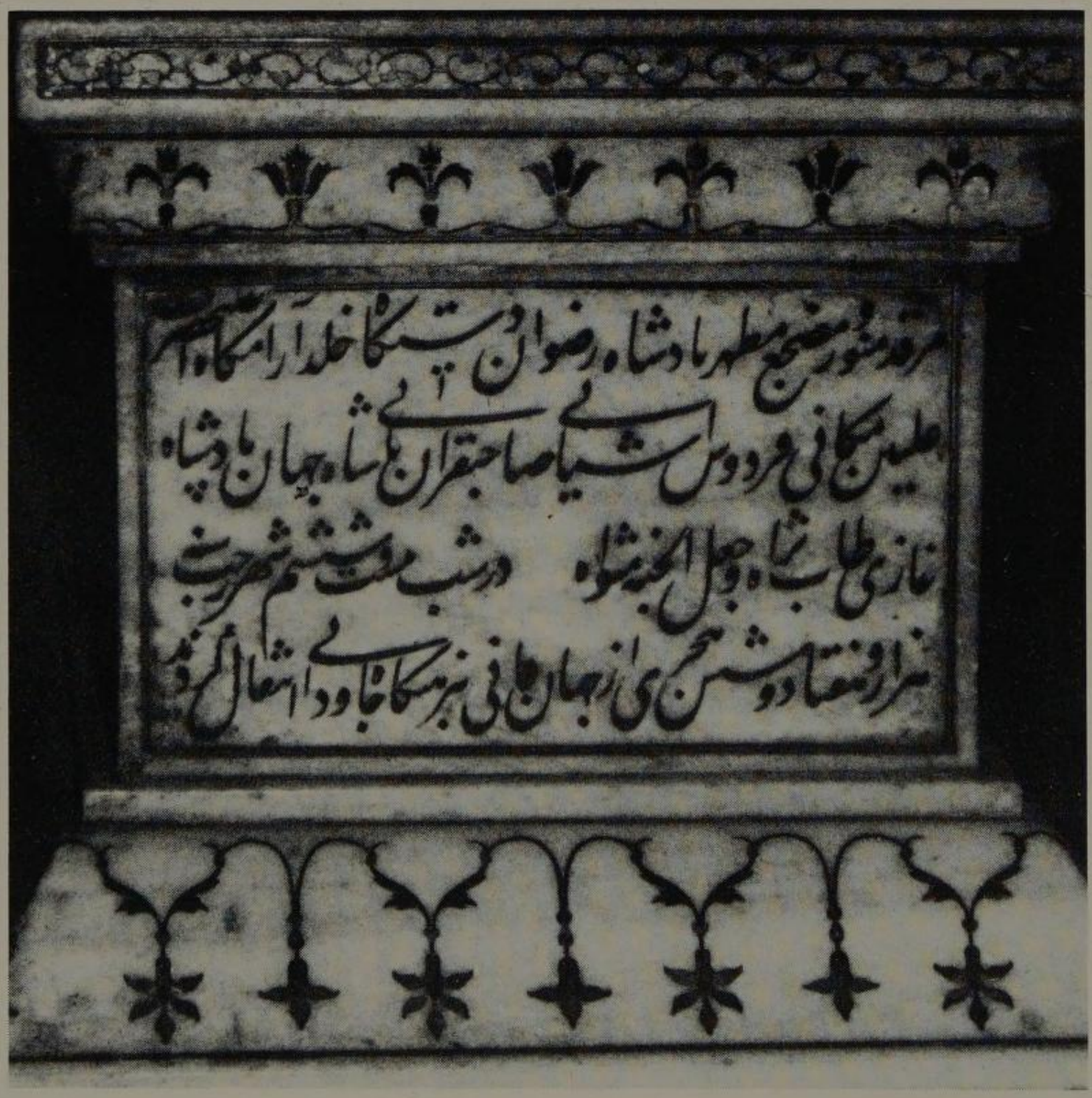
**6.** [UNSIGNED COLOPHON, GATEWAY: North Arch, bottom right side, at end of Qur'anic Inscription No. 4 (Sura 95)]:



"Finished with His help, the Most High, 1057" [1647].



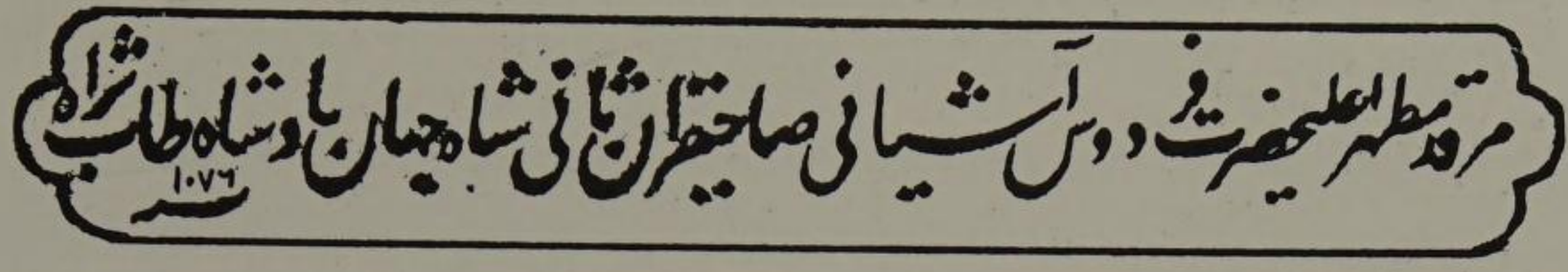
100. Epitaph of Shah Jahan on upper cenotaph.



101. Epitaph of Shah Jahan on lower cenotaph.

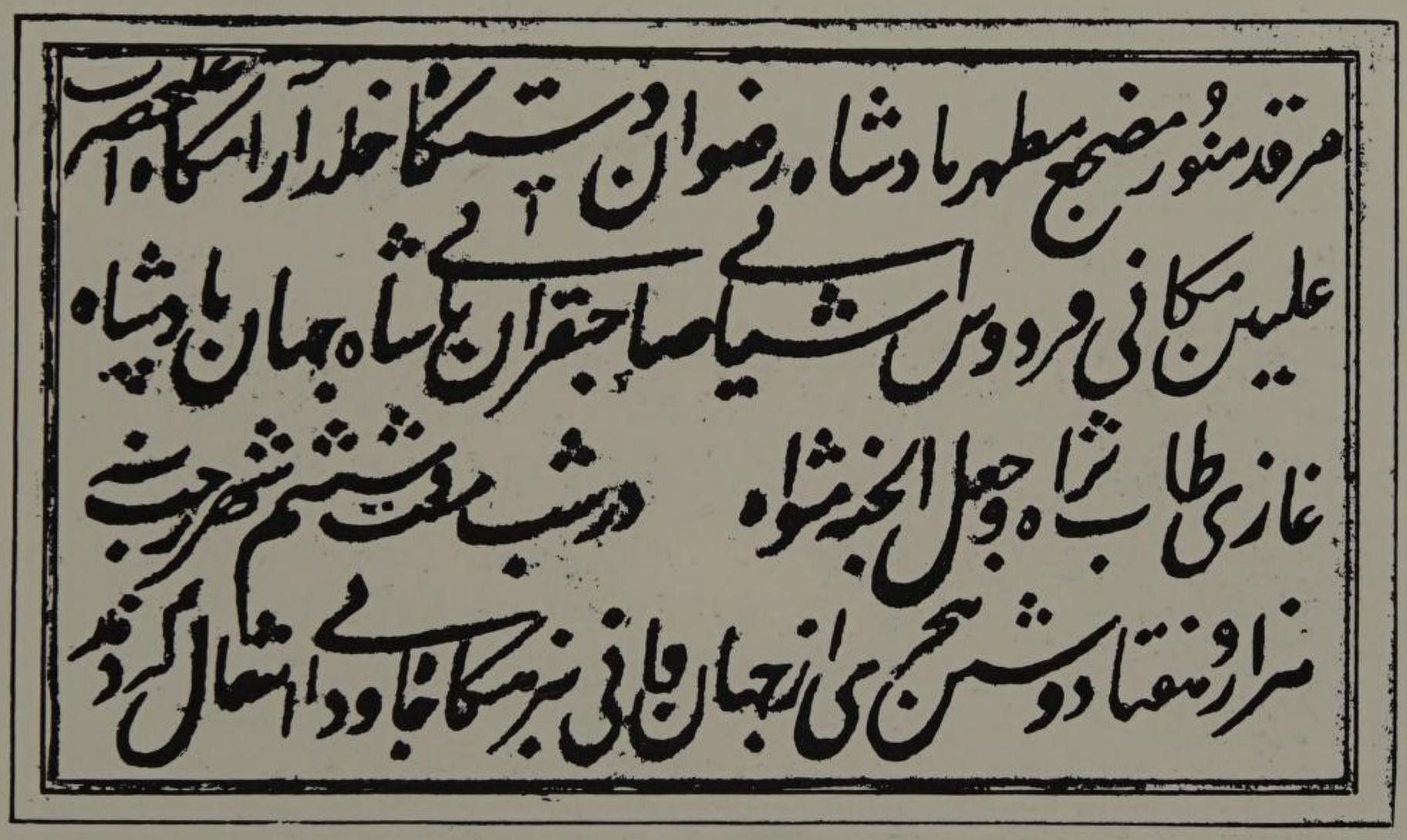
*Epitaphs on Cenotaphs of Shah Jahan*

**7.** [CENOTAPH IN UPPER HALL: lower molding of cenotaph, at south end, or foot]:

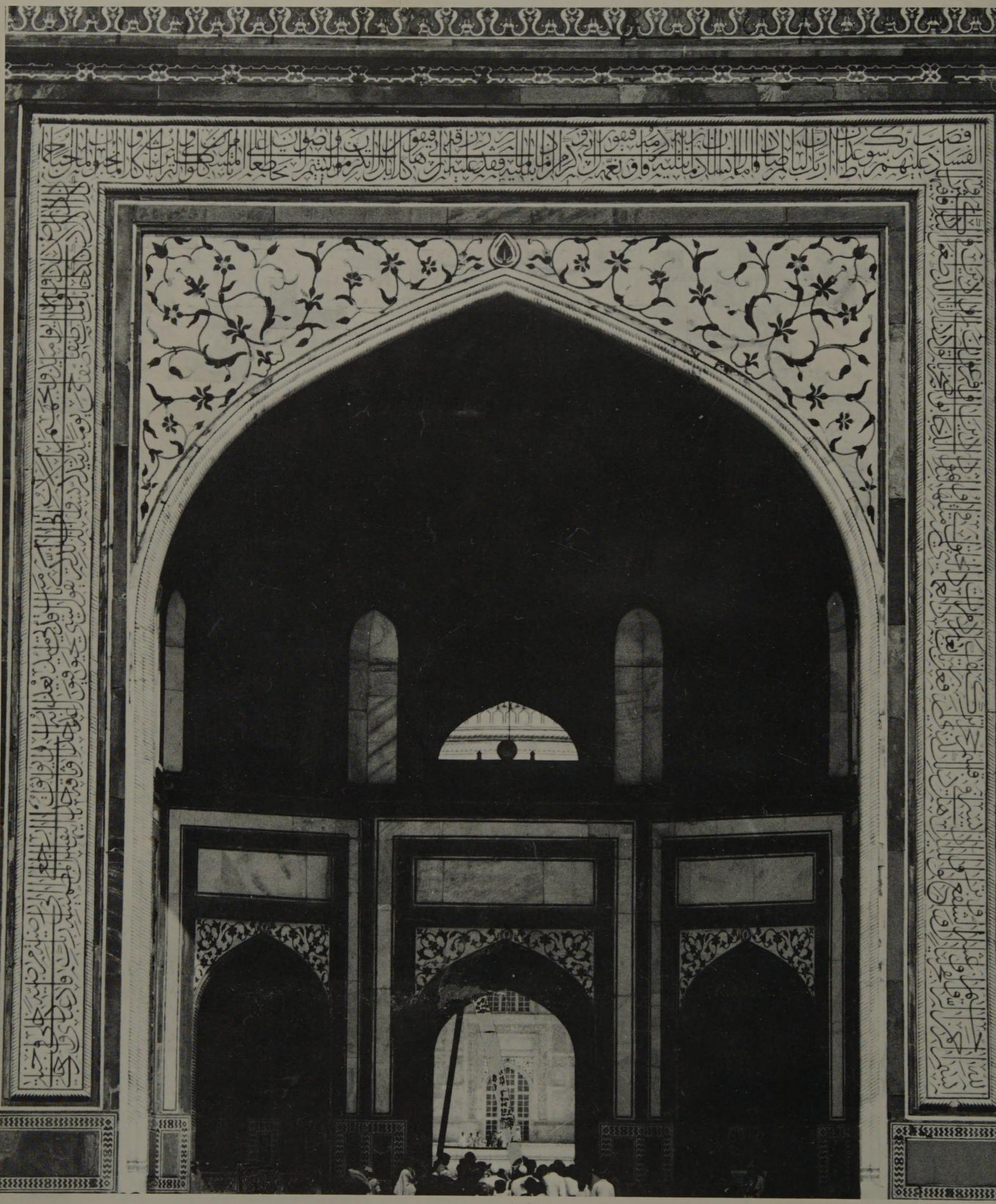


"This is the sacred grave of His Most Exalted Majesty, Firdaus Ashyani ("Dweller in Paradise"), the Second Sahib Qiran, Shah Jahan, *Padshah Ghazi*; may it ever flourish! The year 1076" [1666].

**8.** [CENOTAPH IN CRYPT: dado panel of cenotaph, at south end, or foot]:



"This is the illumined grave and sacred resting place of the Emperor, dignified as Rizwan, residing in Eternity, His Majesty, having his abode in [the celestial realm of] 'Illiyun, Dweller in Paradise, the Second Sahib Qiran, Shah Jahan, *Padshah Ghazi*; may it be sanctified and may Paradise become his abode. He traveled from this world to the banquet-hall of Eternity on the night of the twenty-sixth of the month of Rajab, in the year one-thousand-and-seventy-six Hijri" [31 January 1666].



102. Gateway, south arch.

# 34
# THE QUR'ANIC INSCRIPTIONS

[Given below are complete translations and photographic documentation of all the Qur'anic inscriptions on the tomb. The translations and verse numbering largely follow the edition of 'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali, first published in 1937-38, but certain features of A. J. Arberry's 1955 translation, *The Koran Interpreted*, have also been incorporated.]

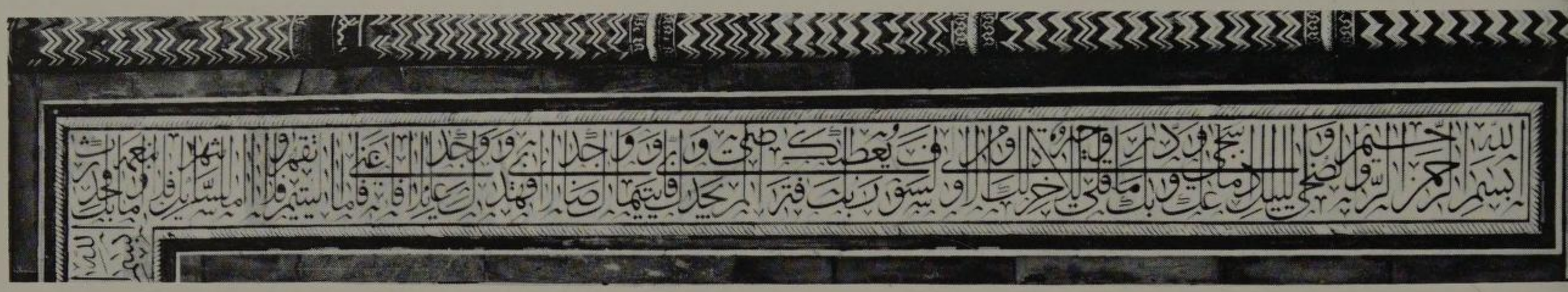
GATEWAY

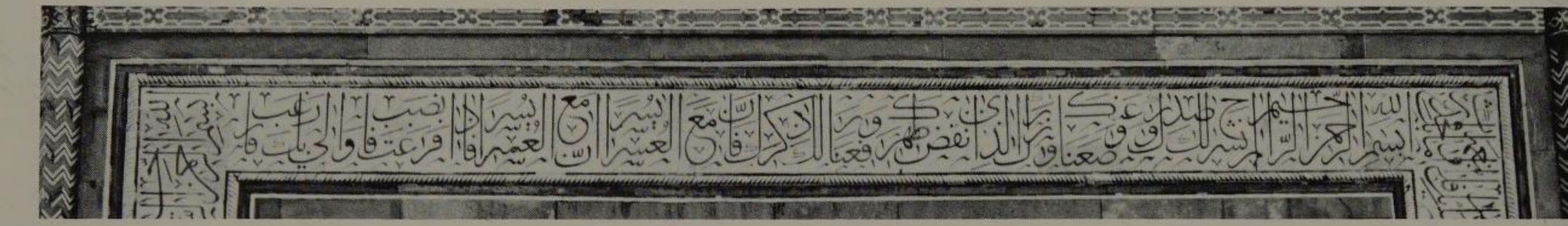
*South Arch*

**1.** [SURA 89: *AL-FAJR*, "THE BREAK OF DAY"]

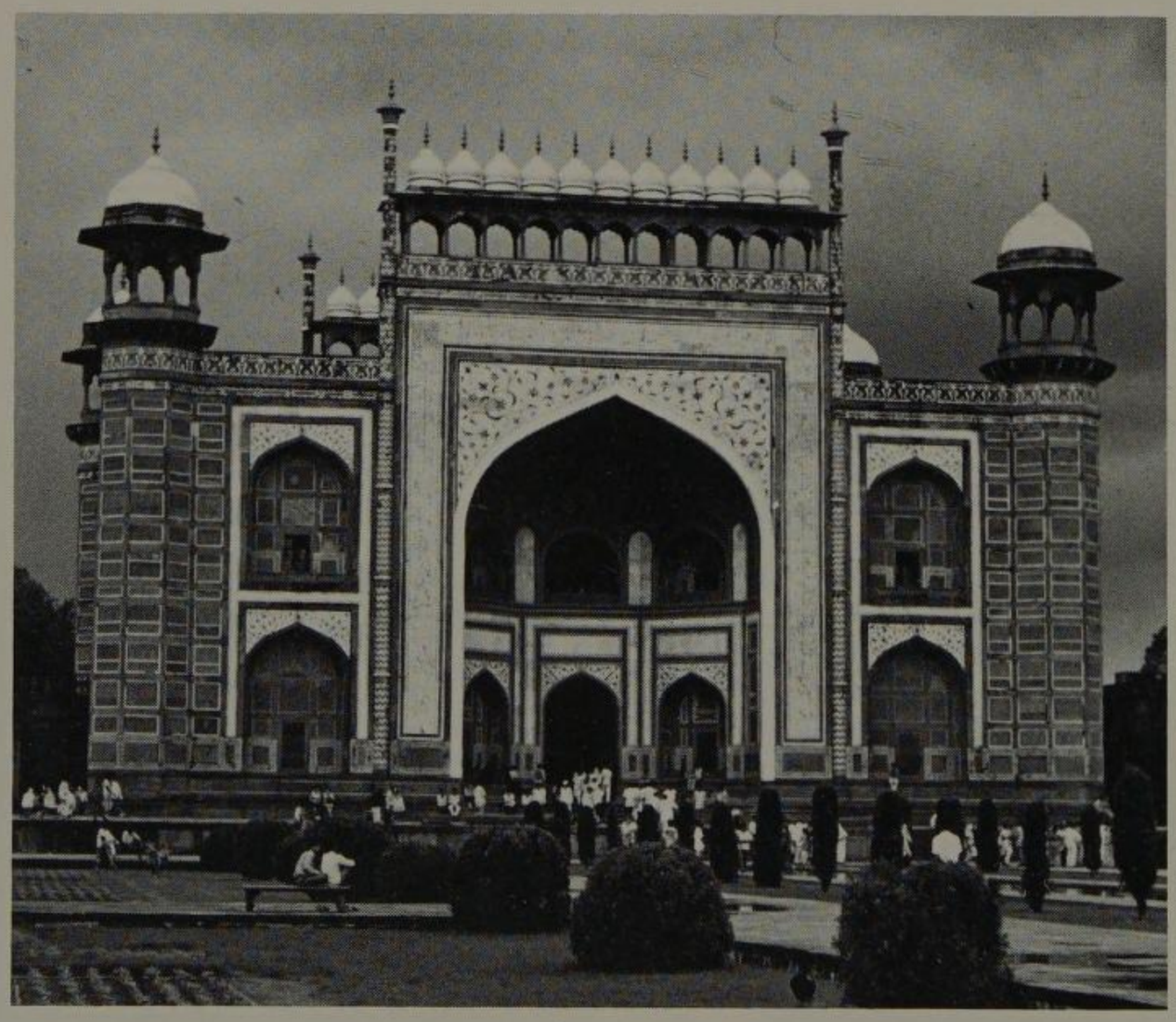
In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

1. By the Break of Day!
2. By the Nights twice five!
3. By the Even and Odd contrasted!
4. And by the Night when it passes away!
5. Is there not in these an adjuration for those who understand?
6. Seest thou not how that Lord dealt with the tribe of 'Ad?
7. With many-columned Iram,
8. The like of which was never created in the land?
9. And with the Thamud, who hewed out rocks in the valley?
10. And with Pharaoh, Lord of Stakes?--
11. Who all behaved insolently in the land,
12. And multiplied corruption therein?
13. Therefore did thy Lord unloose on them a scourge of diverse chastisements;
14. For thy Lord is ever watchful!
15. As for man, when his Lord tries him, bestowing upon him honor and bounty--then he says, "My Lord hath honored me."
16. But when he tries him, restricting his subsistence--then he says, "My Lord hath despised me!"
17. Nay, nay! But ye honor not the orphans;
18. And ye urge not feeding of the poor;
19. And ye devour inheritance greedily;
20. And ye love wealth with inordinate love.
21. Nay! When the earth is ground to powder,
22. And thy Lord cometh, and His angels, rank upon rank,
23. And Hell, that Day, is brought near--on that Day will man remember, but how shall the remembrance profit him?
24. He shall say: "Ah, would that I had made provision for this my life!"
25. For upon that Day, His chastisement shall be such as none can inflict!
26. And His bonds shall be such as none other can bind!
27. *"But O thou soul at peace,*
28. *"Return thou unto thy Lord, well-pleased, and well-pleasing unto Him.*
29. *"Enter thou among my servants,*
30. *"And enter thou My Paradise."*





103. Gateway, details of inscriptions on north arch.



104. View of north facade of gateway, facing south.

*North Arch*

**2.** [SURA 93, *AL-ZUHA*, "THE BRIGHTNESS"]

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

1. By the glorious morning Light!
2. By the Night when it is still!
3. Thy Lord hath not forsaken thee, nor is He displeased.
4. And verily, the Hereafter will be better for thee than the Present.
5. And soon will they Lord give thee a Reward wherewith thou shalt be well pleased.
6. Did He not find thee an orphan and give thee shelter?
7. Did He not find thee wandering and give thee guidance?
8. Did He not find thee in need and make thee sufficient?
9. Therefore, treat not the orphan with harshness,
10. Nor repulse the petitioner;
11. As for the Bounty of thy Lord--proclaim it!

**3.** [SURA 94: *AL-INSHIRAH*, "THE EXPANSION"]

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

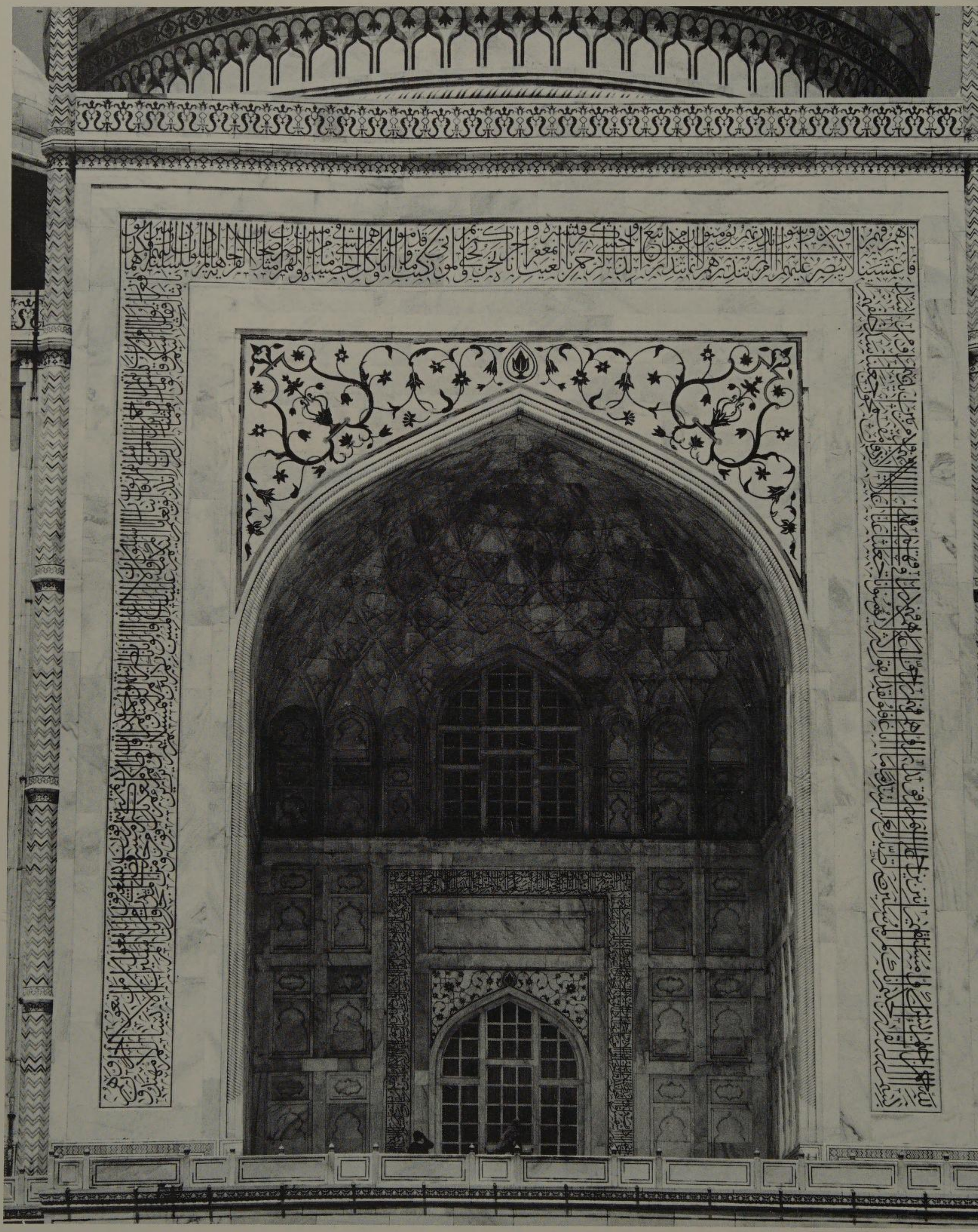
1. Have We not expanded thee thy breast?
2. And eased thee of thy burden
3. Which weighed upon thy back?
4. And exalted thee high in esteem?
5. Yea, verily! with every hardship there comes relief.
6. Verily, with every hardship there comes relief.
7. Therefore, when thou art relieved, still labor hard,
8. And to thy Lord, turn thy attention!

**4** [SURA 95: *AL-TIN*, "THE FIG"]

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

1. By the Fig and the Olive!
2. And the Mount of Sinai!
3. And by this Land made secure!
4. We have indeed created man in the best of molds;
5. Then We do abase him to be the lowest of the low--
6. Save those who believe and do righteous deeds: For they shall have a Reward unfailing!
7. What then shall cause thee to deny the Judgment?
8. Is not God the wisest of Judges?

[HISTORICAL EPIGRAPH No. 6:] *"Finished with His help, the Most High, the year 1057."*



105. South arch of tomb.

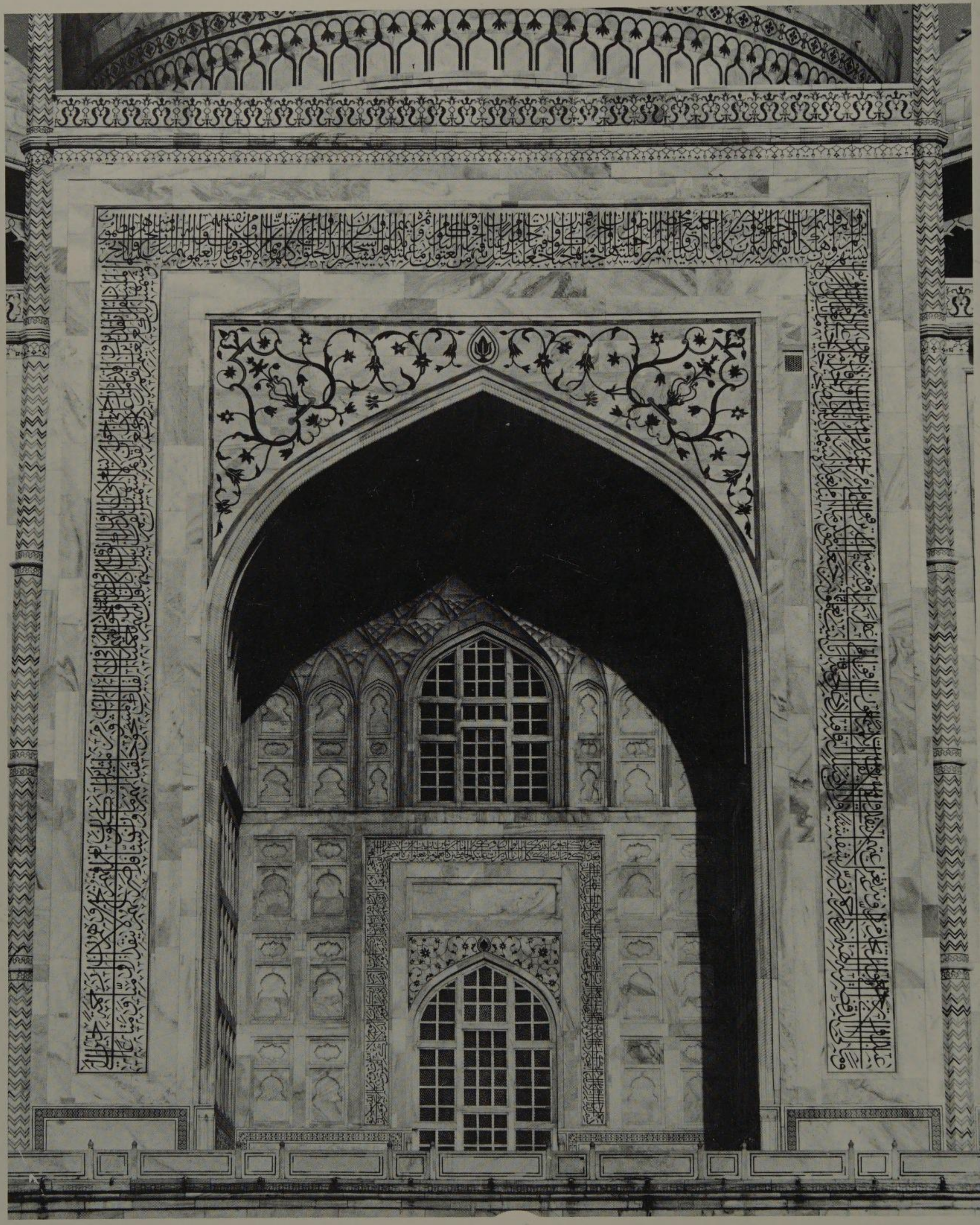
EXTERIOR OF THE TOMB

**5.** [SURA 36: *YA SIN*]

*South Arch*

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

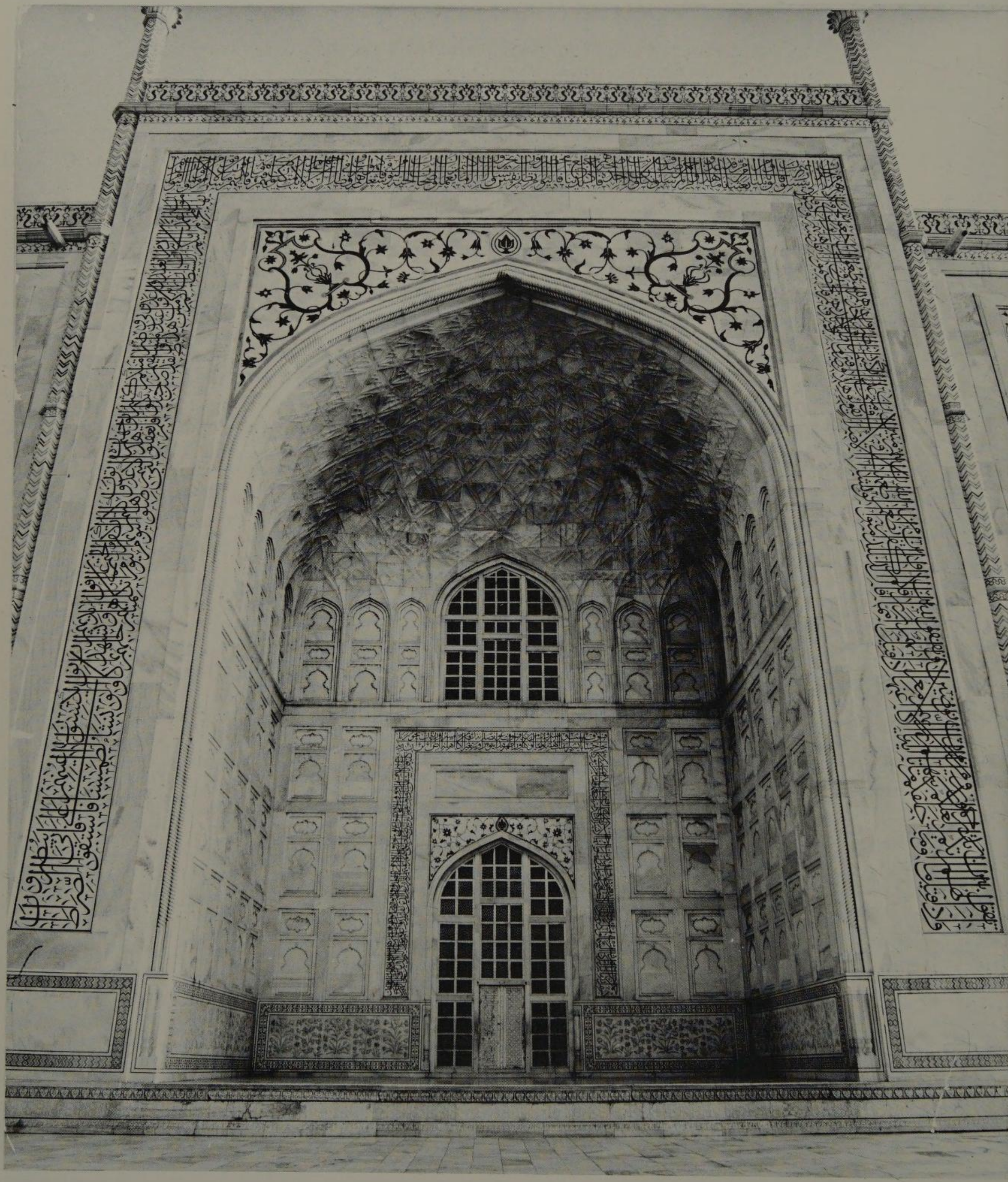
1. *Ya Sin*.
2. By the Qur'an, full of Wisdom!
3. Thou art indeed one of the messengers
4. On a straight path!
5. It is a Revelation sent down of the All-mighty, the All-merciful,
6. That thou mayest admonish a people whose fathers were never warned, and who therefore remained heedless.
7. Already is the Word proved true against the greater part of them--for they do not believe.
8. We have put carcans round their necks reaching to their chins, so that their heads are forced up;
9. And We have put a barrier in front of them and a barrier behind them; and further, We have covered them up so that they cannot see.
10. The same it is to them, whether thou admonish them or thou do not admonish them--they will not believe.
11. Thou canst only admonish one who follows the Message and who fears the All-merciful unseen. To such a one, therefore, bear good tidings--of Forgiveness and a Reward most generous!
12. Verily, it is We who shall bring the dead to life, and record that which they send before and that which they leave behind--of all things have We taken account in a Clear Register.
13. Set forth to them the parable of the people of the city, when there came messengers to it:
14. When We sent to them two messengers they rejected them; but We strengthened them with a third and they said: "Verily, we have been sent as messengers unto you."
15. The people said: "Ye are only men like ourselves; and the All-merciful hath sent down no revelation--ye do nothing but lie."
16. They said: "Our Lord doth know we have been sent as messengers to you;
17. "And our duty is only to proclaim the clear Message."
18. The people said: "Ye are an ill omen to us; if ye desist not, we will stone you, and a grievous punishment will we indeed inflict on you."
19. They said: "Your ill omen be with you--if thus ye receive your admonishment! Nay, but ye are a people transgressing all bounds!"
20. Then there came running from the farthest part of the city, a man, saying, "O my people! Follow the messengers--
21. "Follow those who ask no reward of you, and who are rightly directed.



106. West arch.

*West Arch*

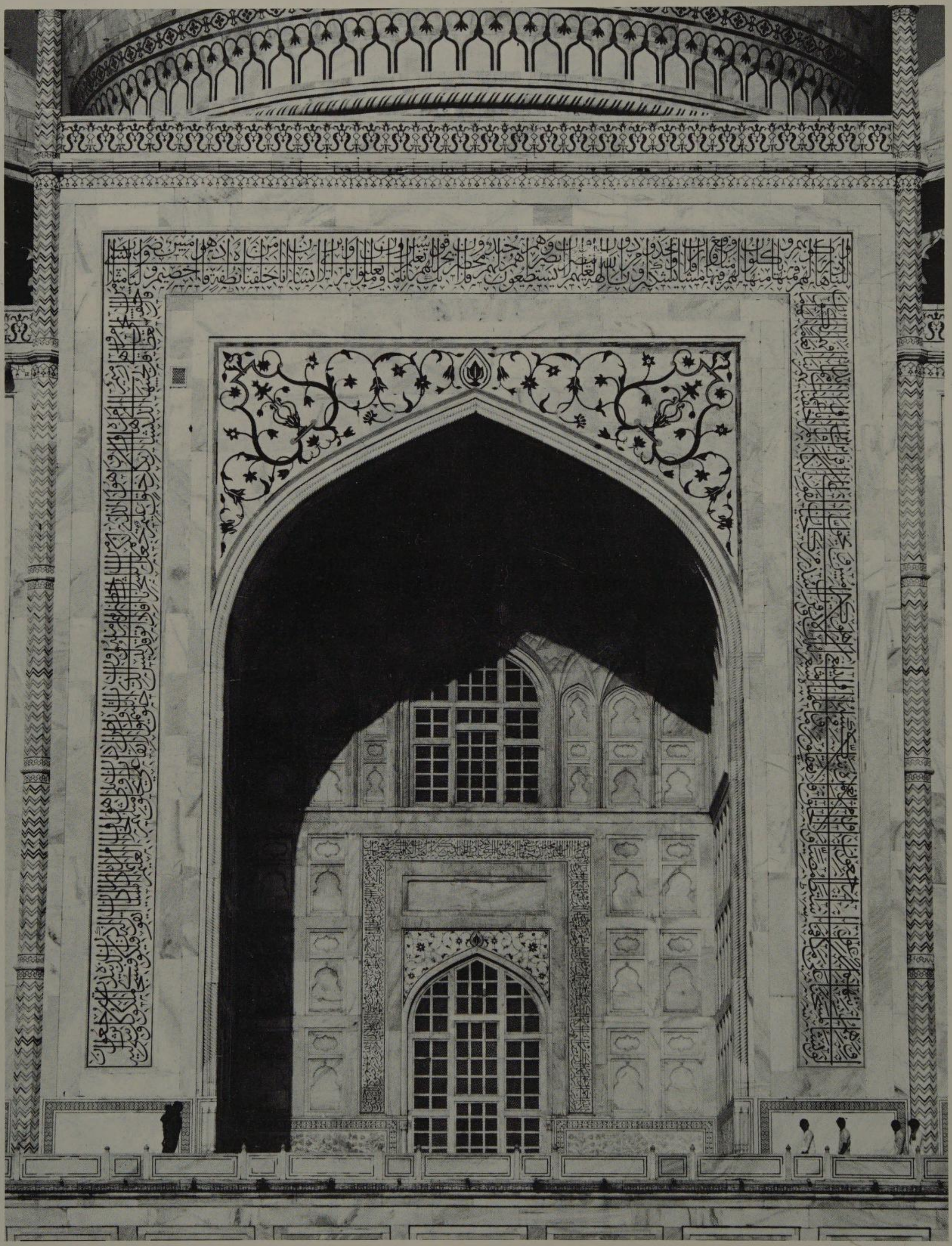
22. "For what reason should I not serve Him Who created me? For unto Him shall ye all be brought back.
23. "Shall I take other gods besides Him? If the All-merciful should intend some adversity for me, their intercession will not avail me anything, nor can they deliver me.
24. "Then should I be in manifest error.
25. "Lo, I believe in your Lord--therefore hear me!"
26. It was said (to him): "Enter thou into Paradise!" And he said: "Ah, would that my people knew--
27. "How my Lord hath granted me Forgiveness and hath enrolled me among those held in honor!"
28. And We sent not down upon his people, after him, any hosts from heaven, nor was it needful that We send any down.
29. It was no more than a single mighty Blast, and behold! they were extinguished and silent.
30. Ah, alas for those servants! Never comes there a messenger unto them but they mock him!
31. See they not how many generations before them We have destroyed? And that it is not unto them that they will return?
32. But every one of them will be brought before Us!
33. A Sign for them is the land that is dead: We do give it life, and produce grain therefrom, of which they do eat.
34. And We produce gardens with palm-trees and vines; and We do cause springs to gush forth therein--
35. That they may enjoy the fruits thereof. It was not their hands that made this; will they not then give thanks?
36. Glory to God! Who created in pairs all that the earth produceth, as well as their own kind, and other things of which they have no knowledge!
37. And a Sign for them is the Night--We withdrew therefrom the Day, and behold they are plunged into darkness.
38. And the Sun runneth its course unto an established limit--that is the ordaining of the All-mighty, the All-knowing.
39. And the moon--We have appointed for it stations to traverse, until it returns like an old withered palm-leaf.
40. It is not permitted to the Sun to overtake the Moon, nor can the Night outstrip the Day; each floats in its orbit.
41. And a Sign for them is that We bore their own kind in the loaded Ark;
42. And We created for them similar vessels whereon they ride.
43. If it were Our Will, We could drown them; then there would be no one to help them, nor could they be delivered--
44. Save through Our Mercy, that they may have enjoyment for a while



107. North arch.

*North Arch*

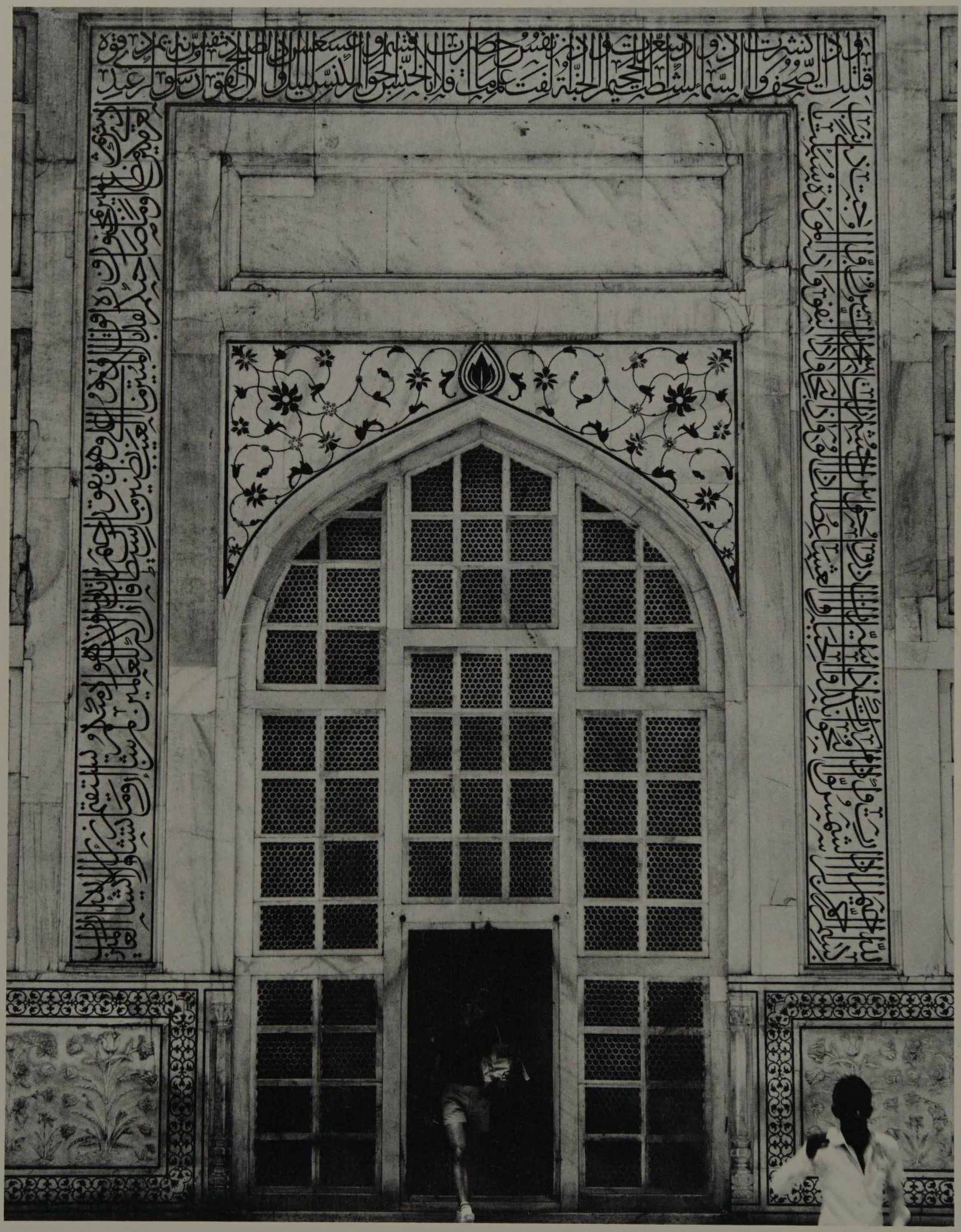
45. And when they are told, "Fear ye that which is before you and that which is behind you, in order that ye may receive Mercy,"
46. Not a Sign comes to them from among the Signs of their Lord, but they turn away therefrom.
47. And when it is said unto them, "Expend from what God hath bestowed on you," the unbelievers say to those who believe: "Shall we then feed those whom, if God will, He would feed Himself?--Ye are in nothing but manifest error!"
48. Further they say, "When shall this prophecy come to pass, if what ye speak is true?"
49. They await only a single Blast--it will seize them while they are yet disputing among themselves!
50. No occasion will they then have to make any bequest, or to return to their own people!
51. The Trumpet shall be sounded, when behold! from their sepulchres the dead will tumble forth unto their Lord!
52. They will cry, "Ah! Woe unto us! Who hath raised us from our sleeping place? This is what the All-merciful promised, and true was the word of the messengers!"
53. It will be not more than a single Blast, when lo! they will all be assembled before Us!
54. Then on that Day, not a soul shall be wronged anything; nor shall ye be rewarded, but according as ye have wrought.
55. Verily the inhabitants of Paradise shall that Day be given over to rejoicing!
56. They and their wives will be in groves of shade, reclining on raised couches;
57. Fruit will be there for them; they shall have whatever they call for.
58. *"Peace!"*--such is their greeting from the Lord All-merciful.
59. *"But O ye in sin! Get ye apart this Day!*
60. *"Did I not enjoin on you, O ye children of Adam, that ye should not worship Satan--for that he is to you an enemy avowed?*
61. *"And that ye should worship Me--this is the Straight Path?*
62. *"But he did lead astray a great multitude of you--did ye not, then, understand?*
63. *"This is the Hell of which ye were warned!*
64. *"Burn therein this Day, for that ye were unbelievers!"*
65. That Day shall We set a seal upon their mouths; but their hands speak unto Us, and their feet bear witness, to all that they did.
66. If it had been Our Will, We would have blotted out their eyes; then might they race toward the Path--but how should they see?



108. East arch.

*East Arch*

67. And if it had been Our Will, We could have transformed them in their places; then should they not have been able to go on, nor could they have returned.
68. And to whomsoever We grant long life, him do We cause to be reversed in nature--will they then not understand?
69. We have not instructed him [the Prophet] in poetry, nor is it seemly for him; it is naught else than a Remembrance and a Recitation [Qur'an] making things plain--
70. That he may warn whosoever is living, and that the Word may be fulfilled against the unbelievers.
71. Do they not see that it is We Who have created for them--among the things which Our hands have fashioned--the cattle of which they are the possessors?
72. And that We have subjected them to their use, so that some of them they have for riding, and some for food?
73. Other benefits do they also derive from them, and wherewith to drink--will they not then be thankful?
74. Yet they have taken other gods besides God, that they might be helped!
75. They have not the power to help them, though they be as troops assembled.
76. Let not their speech, then, grieve them, though they be as troops assembled.
77. Doth not man see that it is We Who have created him from sperm? Yet behold! He is an open adversary!
78. And he propoundeth unto Us a comparison, and forgetteth his creation! He says: "Who can return life to bones when they are decayed?"
79. Say: "He will give them life Who created them the first time--for He is well-versed in every kind of creation!
80. "The same Who produces for you fire out of the green tree, when behold! ye kindle there with!"
81. It is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like thereof?--Yea, indeed! For He is the Supreme Creator, All-knowing!
82. Verily, when He intends a thing, His command is: *"Be!"*--and it is.
83. So glory be to Him in Whose hands is the Dominion of all things, and unto Whom ye shall be returned!



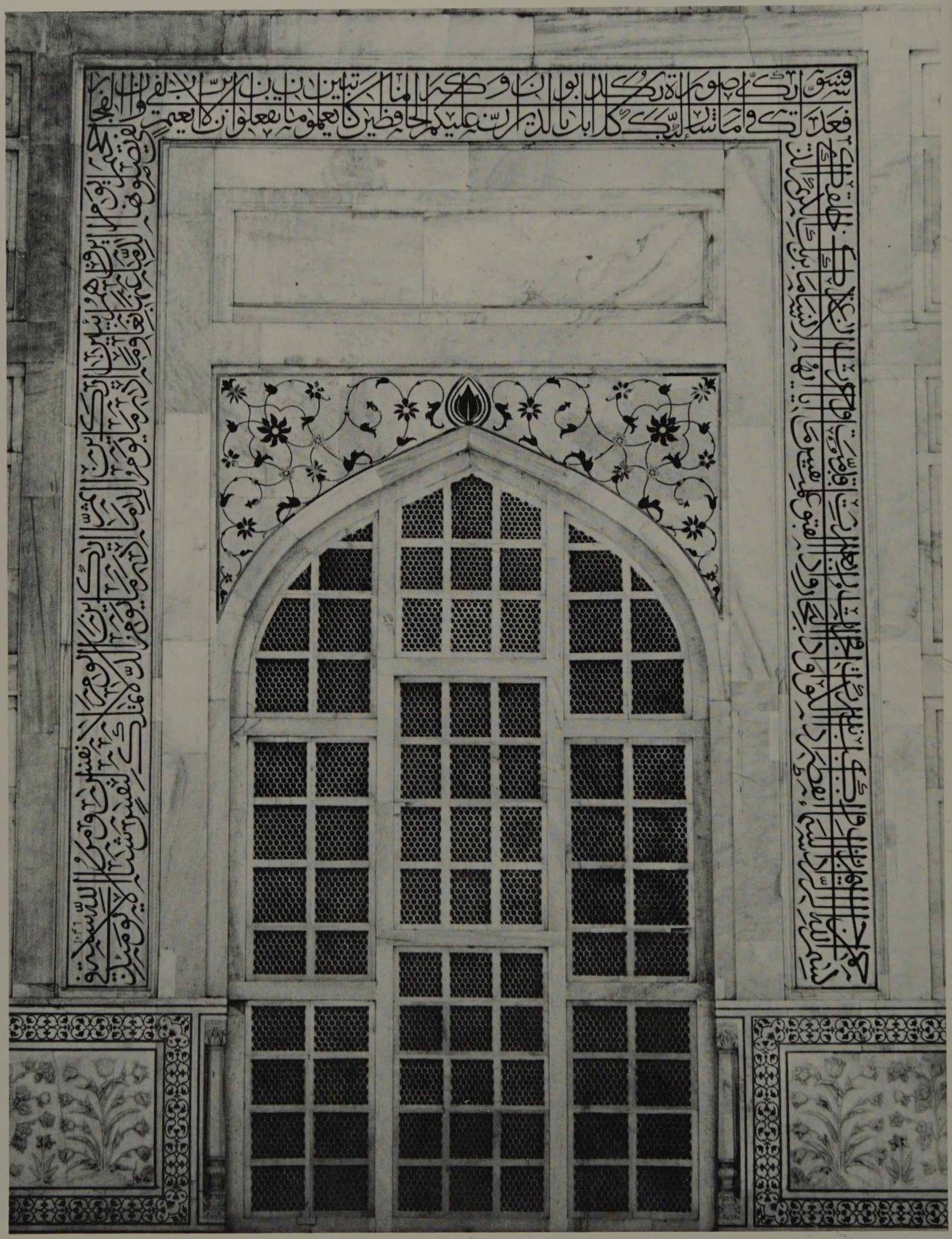
109. South door of tomb.

*South Door*

**6.** [SURA 81: *AL-TAKWIR*, "THE FOLDING UP"

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

1. When the Sun shall be folded up--
2. When the Stars shall be thrown down--
3. When the mountains shall be made to pass away--
4. When the camels soon to bear young shall be left unattended--
5. When the wild beasts shall be herded together--
6. When the seas shall boil over--
7. When the souls shall be sorted and joined--
8. When the buried infant shall be asked
9. For what crime she was slain--
10. When the Books shall be laid open--
11. When the Heavens shall be unveiled--
12. When Hell shall be set blazing--
13. And when Paradise shall be brought near--
14. Then, every soul shall know what it hath wrought!
15. Nay! I swear by the Stars that recede!
16. Running their course and setting quickly!
17. And by the Night departing!
18. And by the Morning respiring!
19. Truly this is the word of an illustrious Messenger,
20. Endued with power, with rank before the Lord of the Throne!
21. With authority there; faithful to his trust.
22. Your Companion is not possessed--
23. He truly saw him on the clear horizon!
24. Nor doth he withhold grudgingly a knowledge of the Unseen!
25. Nor is it the word of an accursed devil!
26. Then whither go ye?
27. Verily, this is no other than a Message unto all beings:
28. To whosoever among you shall be willing to walk straightly--
29. But will ye shall not except as God wills, the Lord of the Worlds!



110. West door.

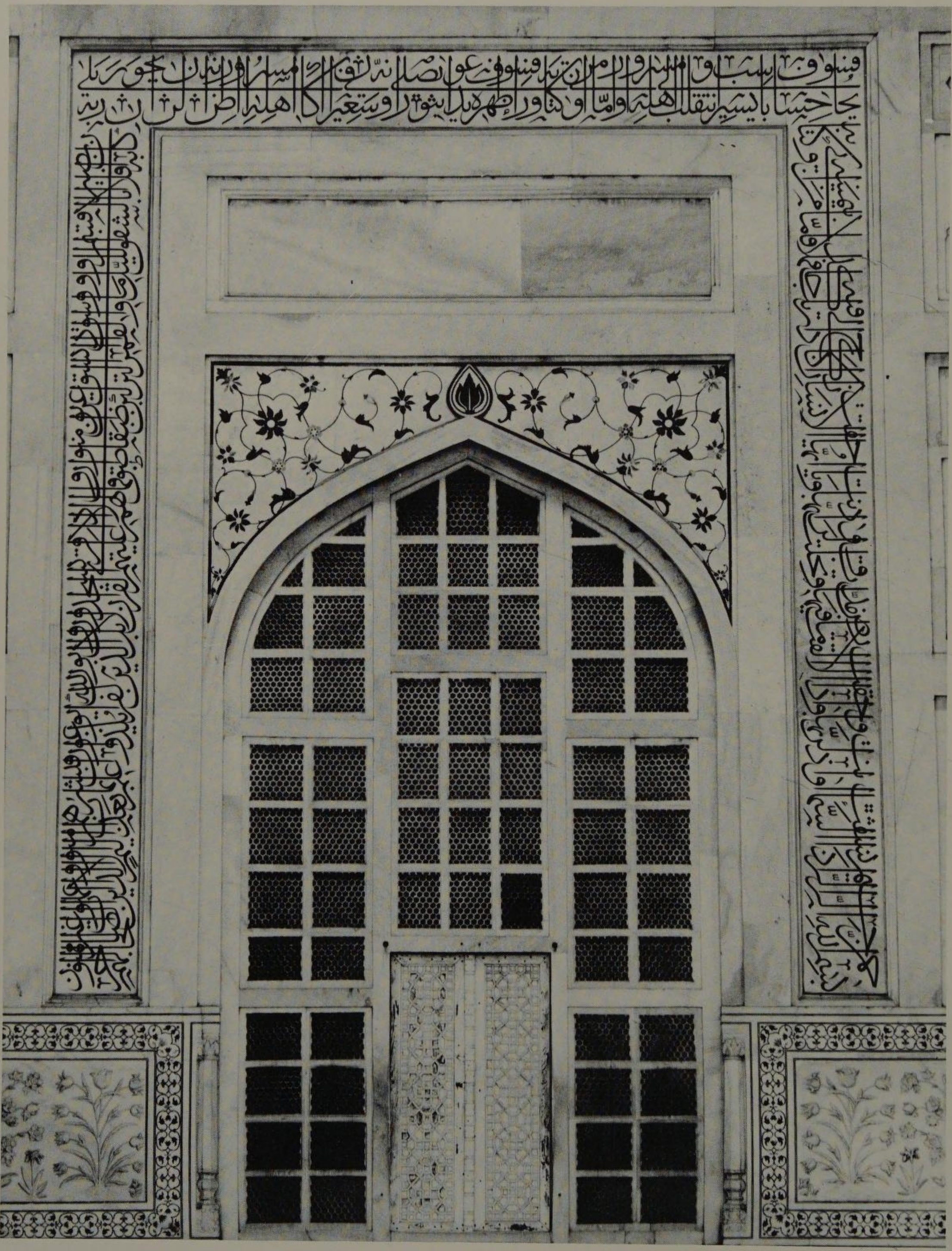
*West Door*

**7.** [SURA 82: *AL-INFITAR*, "THE CLEAVING ASUNDER"]

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

1. When the Sky shall be cleft asunder--
2. When the Stars shall be scattered--
3. When the Seas shall be poured forth--
4. And when the Graves shall be overturned--
5. Then shall every soul know what it hath sent forward and kept back!
6. O Man! What hath misled thee concerning thy Lord, the Beneficent?
7. Who hath created thee, and shaped thee, and proportioned thee aright?
8. In whatever form He will, doth He compose thee.
9. Nay! But ye do deny the Judgment!
10. Yet truly there are guardians over you:
11. Illustrious recorders,
12. Who know that which ye do.
13. Verily the righteous shall be in Bliss!
14. And verily the wicked shall be in Hell!
15. Wherein they shall burn on the Day of Judgment--
16. And they shall not be able to keep away therefrom!
17. And what shall cause thee to understand what the Day of Judgment is?
19. It is a Day when no soul shall possess aught to benefit another--that Day, the Command shall belong to God!

[HISTORICAL EPIGRAPH NO. 4:] *"In the year 1046."*



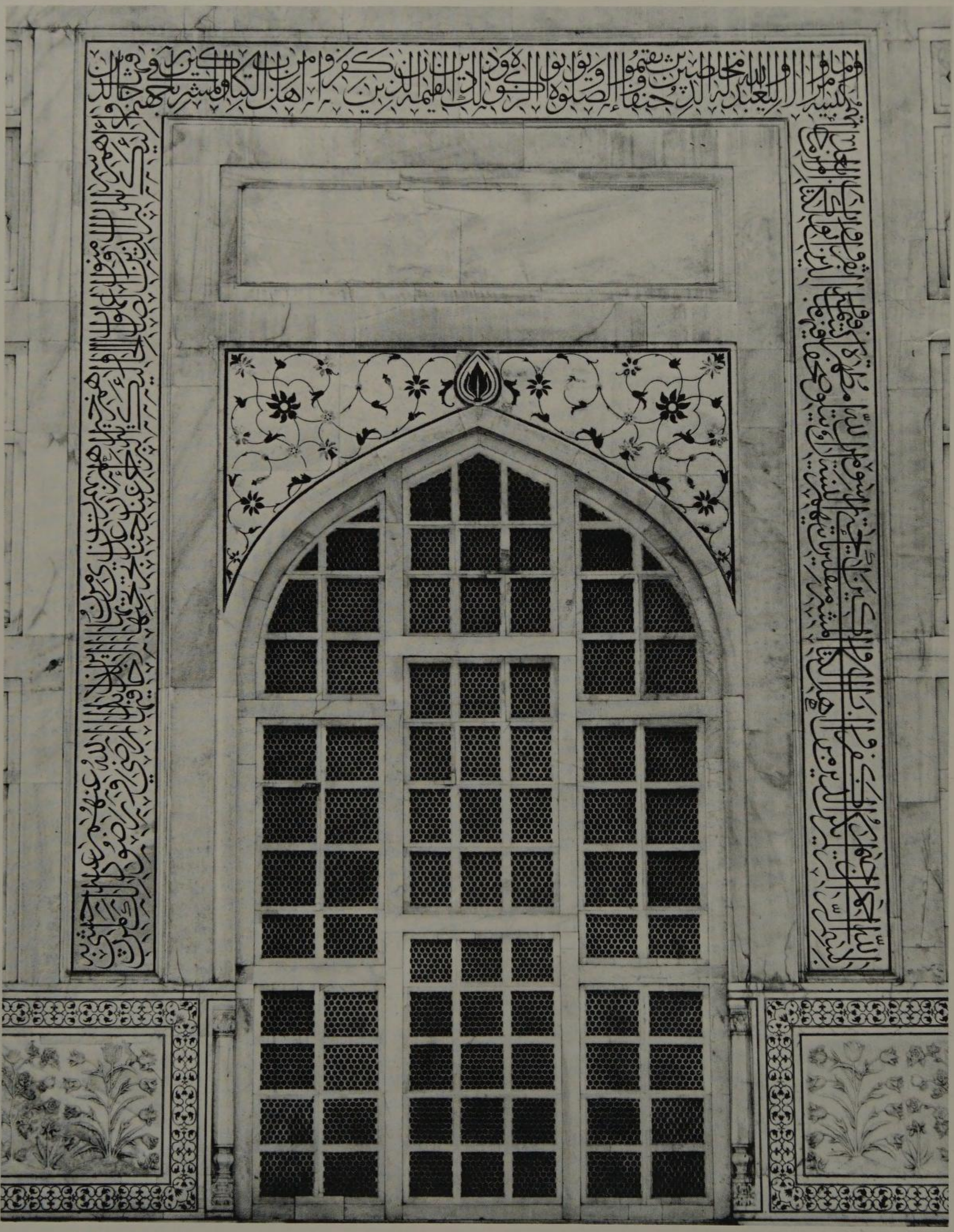
111. North door.

*North Door*

**8.** [SURA 84: *AL-INSHIQAQ*, "THE RENDING ASUNDER"]

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

1. When the Sky shall be rent asunder,
2. And attends unto its Lord, fitly composed,
3. When the Earth shall be flattened out,
4. And casts forth that which is within it and becomes empty,
5. And attends unto its Lord, fitly composed--
6. O thou Man! Verily thou art ever toiling on towards thy Lord, painfully toiling, but thou shalt meet Him!--
7. Then, he who is given his Record in his right hand--
8. Soon will his account be taken by an easy reckoning,
9. And he will turn to his people, rejoicing!
10. But he who is given his Record behind his back--
11. Soon will he cry for Perdition,
12. And he will enter a Blazing Fire!
13. Truly, did he once go about among his people. rejoicing,
14. Truly, did he think that he would not have to return!
15. Nay, verily! for his Lord was watchful of him.
16. Wherefore, I swear by the fiery glow of Sunset!
17. And by the Night which enfoldeth!
18. And by the Moon in its fullness!
19. Ye shall surely travel from stage to stage.
20. What then is the matter with them, that they believe not?
21. And when the Qur'an is recited to them, that they fall not prostrate?
22. Nay, the unbelievers will deny,
23. But God has full knowledge of what they conceal.



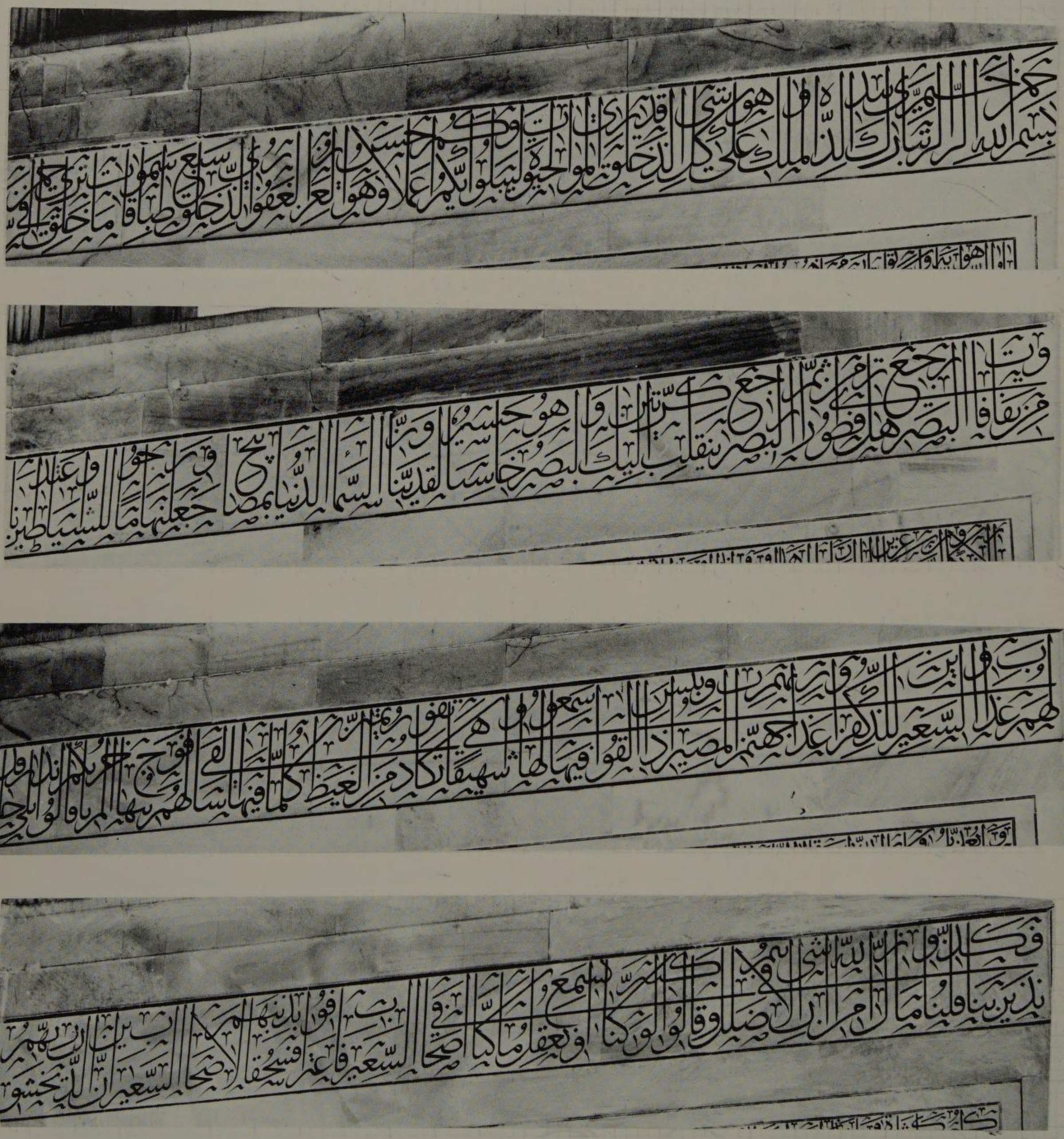
112. East door.

*East Door*

**9.** [SURA 98: *AL-BAIYINA*, "THE CLEAR EVIDENCE"]

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

1. The unbelievers among the People of the Book, and the idolators, would not desist until there should come to them Clear Evidence--
2. A Messenger from God, reciting pages kept pure and holy,
3. Wherein are true scriptures.
4. Nor were the People of the Book divided among themselves until after there came to them the Clear Evidence.
5. And they have been commanded only to worship God, offering Him sincere devotion, sound in faith; to establish prayer; and to practice charity--that is the right religion.
6. Verily the unbelievers among the People of the Book, and the idolators, shall be cast into Hell, to dwell therein--they are the worst of creatures!
7. But those who believe and do good works--those are the best of creatures!
8. Their Reward is with God: Gardens of Paradise, beneath which rivers flow! They shall dwell therein forever, God well-pleased with them, and they with Him--this is for him who feareth the Lord!



113. Interior of tomb, details of inscriptions above Southeast, East, Northeast, and North arches.

INTERIOR OF THE TOMB

*Upper Register (beginning above Southeast Arch)*

**10.** [SURA 67: *AL-MULK*, "THE DOMINION"]

**[SE]** In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

1. Blessed is He in Whose hands is the Dominion, for He hath power over all things!
2. He Who created Death and Life, that He might try you, which of you shall be most righteous in actions--and He is the Exalted in Might, the All-forgiving!
3. He who created the Seven Heavens one above another! No want of proportion wilt thou see...

**[E]** in the Creation of the All-merciful! Return thy gaze--seest thou any flaw?

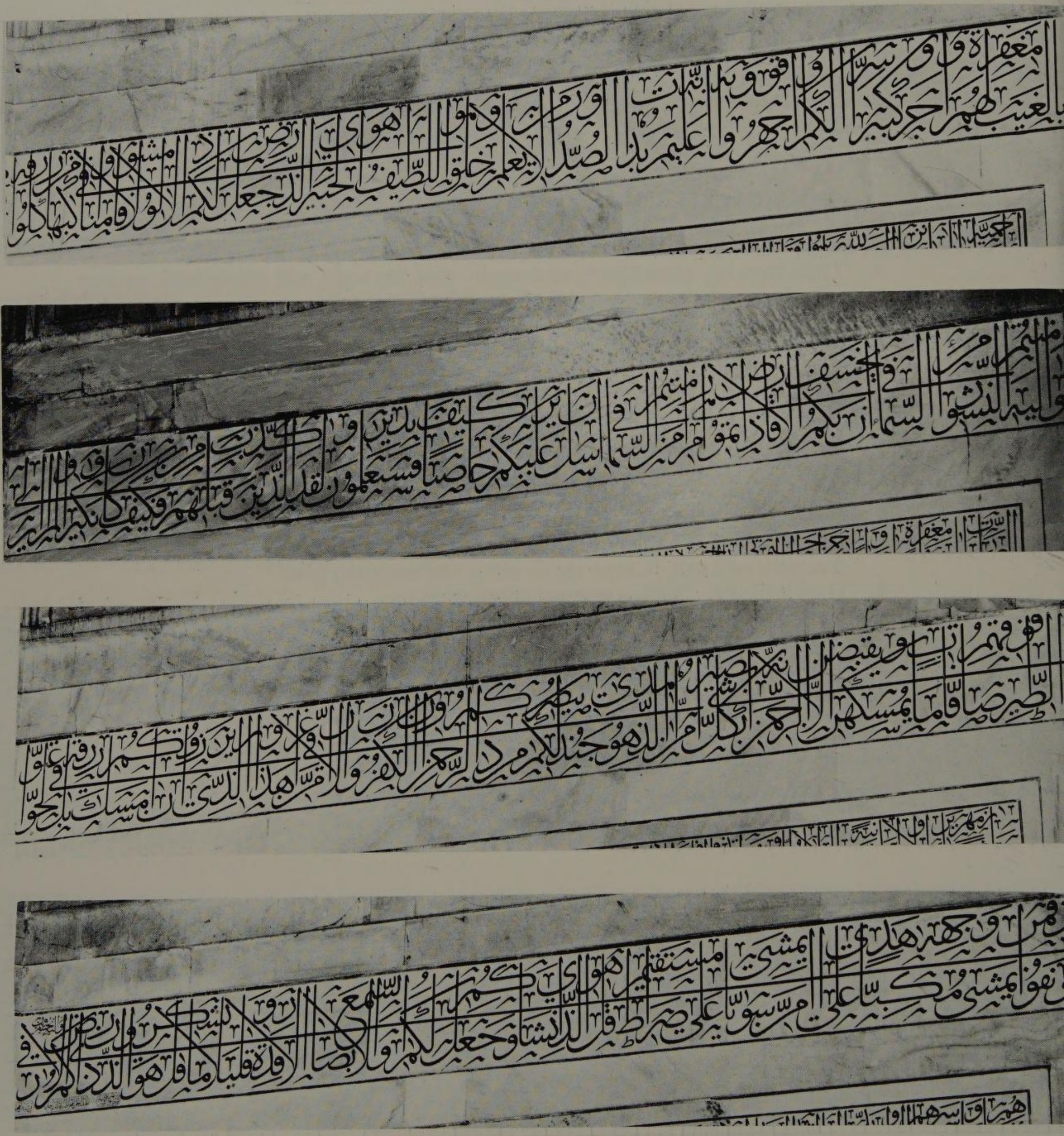
4. Then turn thy gaze again, and again--and thy sight will come back to thee dazzled and weary, in a state benumbed!
5. And We have adorned the lower Heaven with Lamps, and We have placed them there to be hurled at the evil ones--and We have prepared for them...

**[NE]** the chastisement of the Blazing Fire.

6. For those who reject their Lord, there awaits the torment of Hell--and terrible is the way thither!
7. And when they are cast therein, they will hear the drawing in of its breath even as it blazes forth,
8. Almost bursting with fury! And as often as a troop is cast therein, its keepers will ask, "Came there not a warner unto you?"
9. They will say: "Yea, a warner came unto us...

**[N]** but we rejected him and said, 'God hath sent down no revelation--ye are in nothing but egregious delusion!'"

10. They will further say: "Had we but listened, or rightly considered, we should not have been among the inhabitants of the Blazing Fire!"
11. They will thus acknowledge their sins, but far removed will be the inhabitants of the Blaze!"
12. But verily those who fear their Lord...



114. Interior, details of inscriptions above Northwest, West, Southwest, and South arches.

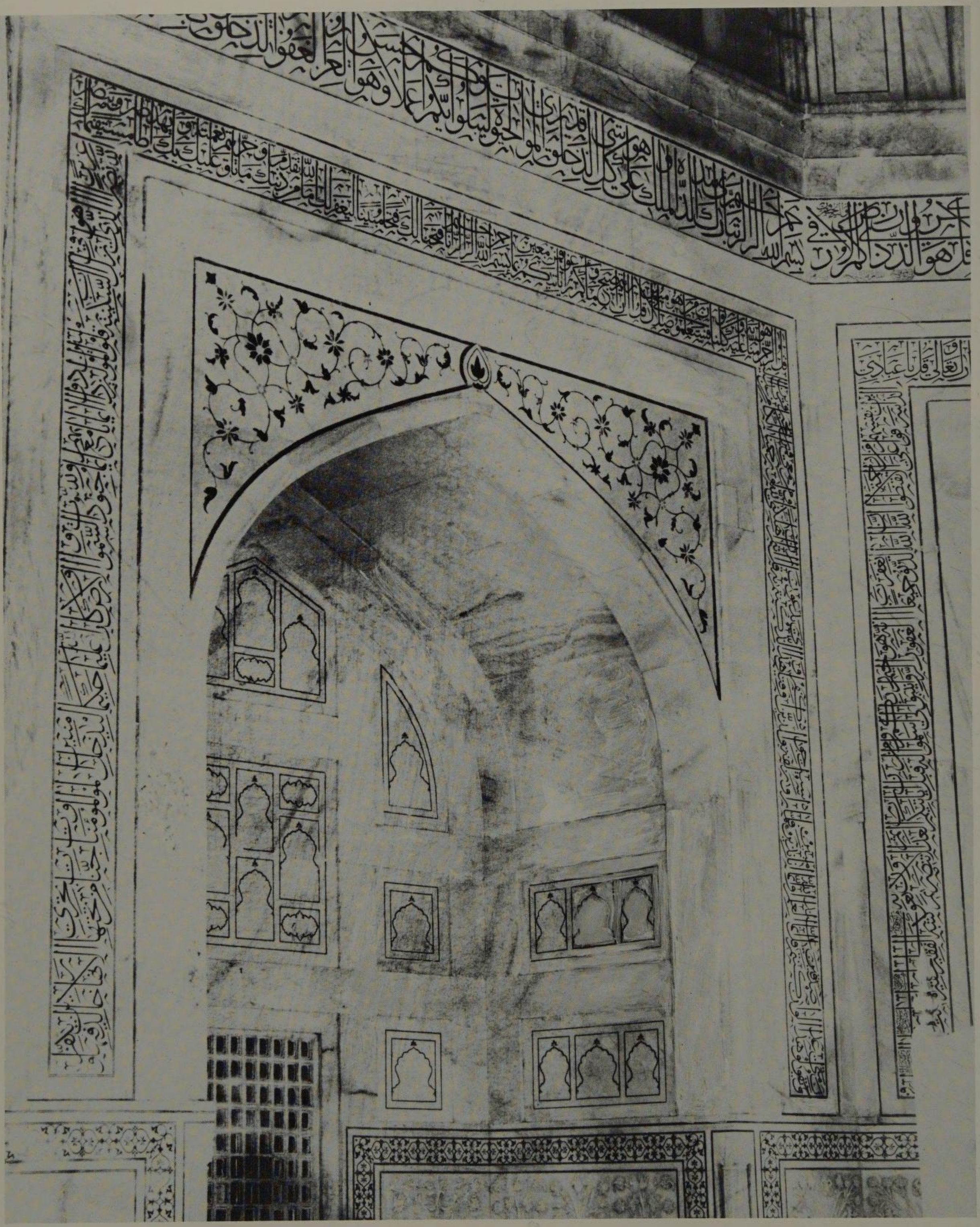
[NW] ...unseen shall receive Forgiveness and a great Reward.
13. And whether ye hide your word or proclaim it, He surely hath knowledge of what lies concealed within your breasts!
14. And should He not know, He that created? For He is the All-subtle, the All-cognizant.
15. It is He Who hath leveled the earth for you; wherefore walk through the regions thereof, and partake of the sustenance which He hath provided...

[W] for unto Him shall be the Resurrection!
16. What! Are ye secure that He Who is in Heaven shall not cleave open the earth under you when it shakes?
17. And are ye secure that He Who is in Heaven shall not loose against you the stone-charged whirlwind? Then shall ye comprehend my Warning!
18. There were also before you those who disbelieved--how then was my Rejection!
19. Do they not observe...

[SW] the birds above them, spreading their wings and folding them in? None can uphold them except the All-merciful: truly it is He that watches over all things.
20. Or who is there who shall be as an armed host to defend you, apart from the All-merciful? Verily the unbelievers are in nothing but delusion.
21. Or who is there who shall supply you with sustenance if He were to withhold His provision? Nay, they obstinately persist in insolent impiety...

[S] and aversion.
22. Is he therefore better directed who goes groveling upon his face--or he who walks upright on a Straight Path?
23. Say: "It is He Who hath created you and endowed you with hearing, sight, and understanding--yet how little thanks ye give!"
24. Say: "It is He Who hath multiplied you through the earth...

[HISTORICAL EPIGRAPH NO. 3:] *"Written by the son of Qasim al-Shirazi...'Abd al-Haqq, entitled Amanat Khan...in the year 1045 Hijri."*



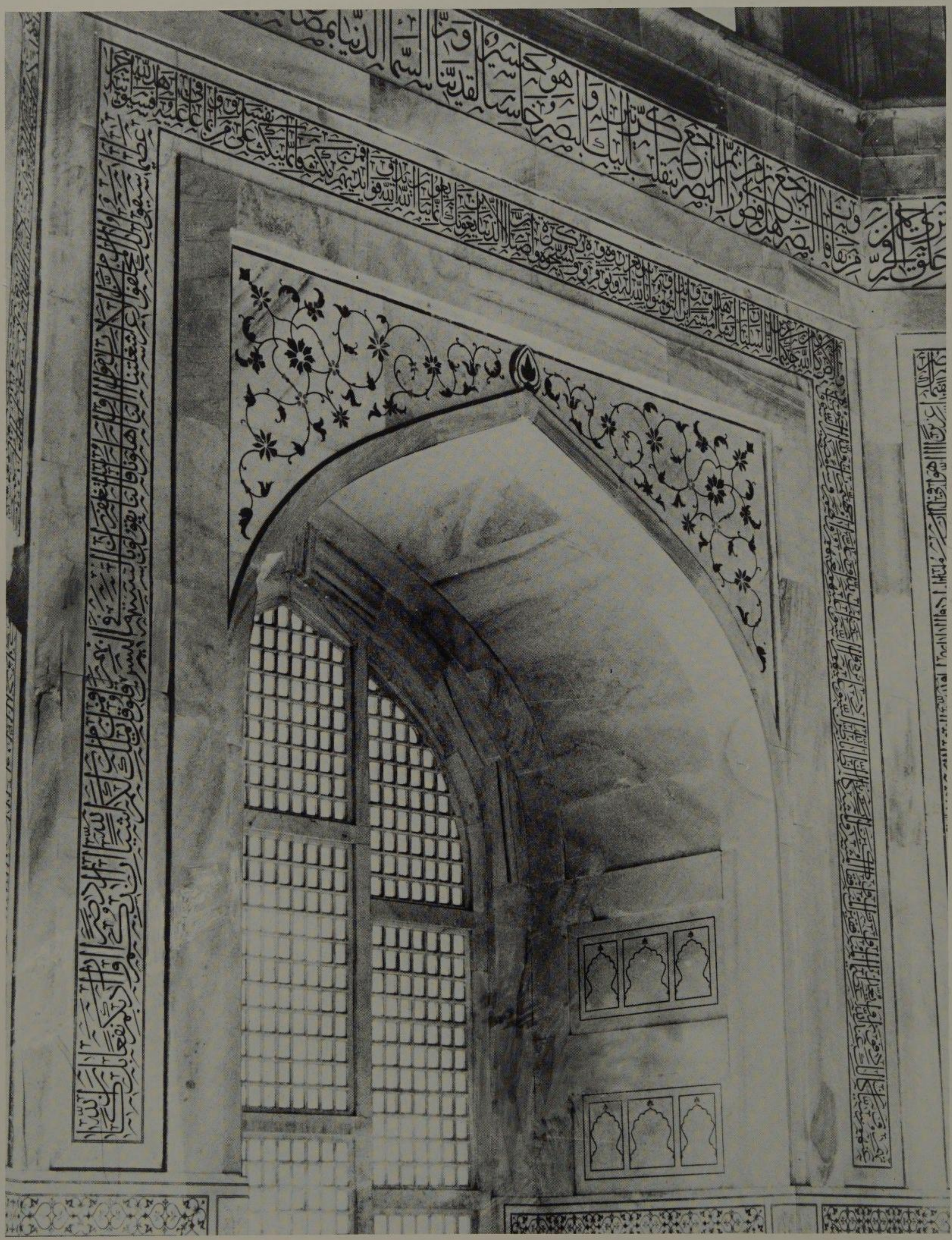
115. Interior of tomb, Southeast arch.

*Southeast Arch* (beginning at bottom right side)

[24. cont.] ...and to Him shall ye be gathered together!"
25. They ask, "When shall this promise come to pass, if ye speak truly?"
26. Say: "The knowledge of this is with God alone: I am but a clear warner."
27. But when they see it near at hand, then grieved will be the faces of the unbelievers; and it shall be said unto them: "This is what ye have been demanding!"
28. Say: "What think ye? Whether God were to destroy me and those with me; or whether He were to bestow His Mercy on us--yet who can deliver the unbelievers from a grievous Penalty?"
29. Say: "He is the All-merciful! In Him do we believe, and in Him do we put our trust. Verily ye shall soon know who is in manifest error!"
30. Say: "What think ye? If in the morning your streams should have sunk into the earth, who then shall give you clear and running water?"

**11.** [SURA 48, *AL-FATH*, "VICTORY"]

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.
1. Verily We have granted thee a manifest Victory!
2. That God may forgive thee the faults of the past and those to follow; fulfill His favor upon thee; and direct thee on the Straight Path--
3. And that God may assist thee with powerful assistance!
4. It is He Who hath sent down *Sechina* into the hearts of the believers, that they may add faith to their faith--for to God belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth; and God is full of Knowledge and Wisdom.
5. That He may admit the believers, men and women alike, to the Garden of Paradise, beneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein forever; and acquit...



116. East arch.

*East Arch*

[5. cont.] ...them of their evil deeds--and that is, in the sight of God, the highest achievement!

6. And that He may chastise the hypocrites, men and women alike, and the idolators, men and women alike, who conceive evil thoughts of God--upon them misfortune shall befall! And the wrath of God is on them, and He curseth them, and hath prepared Hell for them--and terrible is the way thither!

7. For to God belong the hosts of the heavens and earth; and God is All-mighty, All-wise.

8. Verily We have sent thee as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings; and as a warner--

9. In order that ye may believe in God and His Messenger, that ye may assist and honor Him, and celebrate His praises morning and evening.

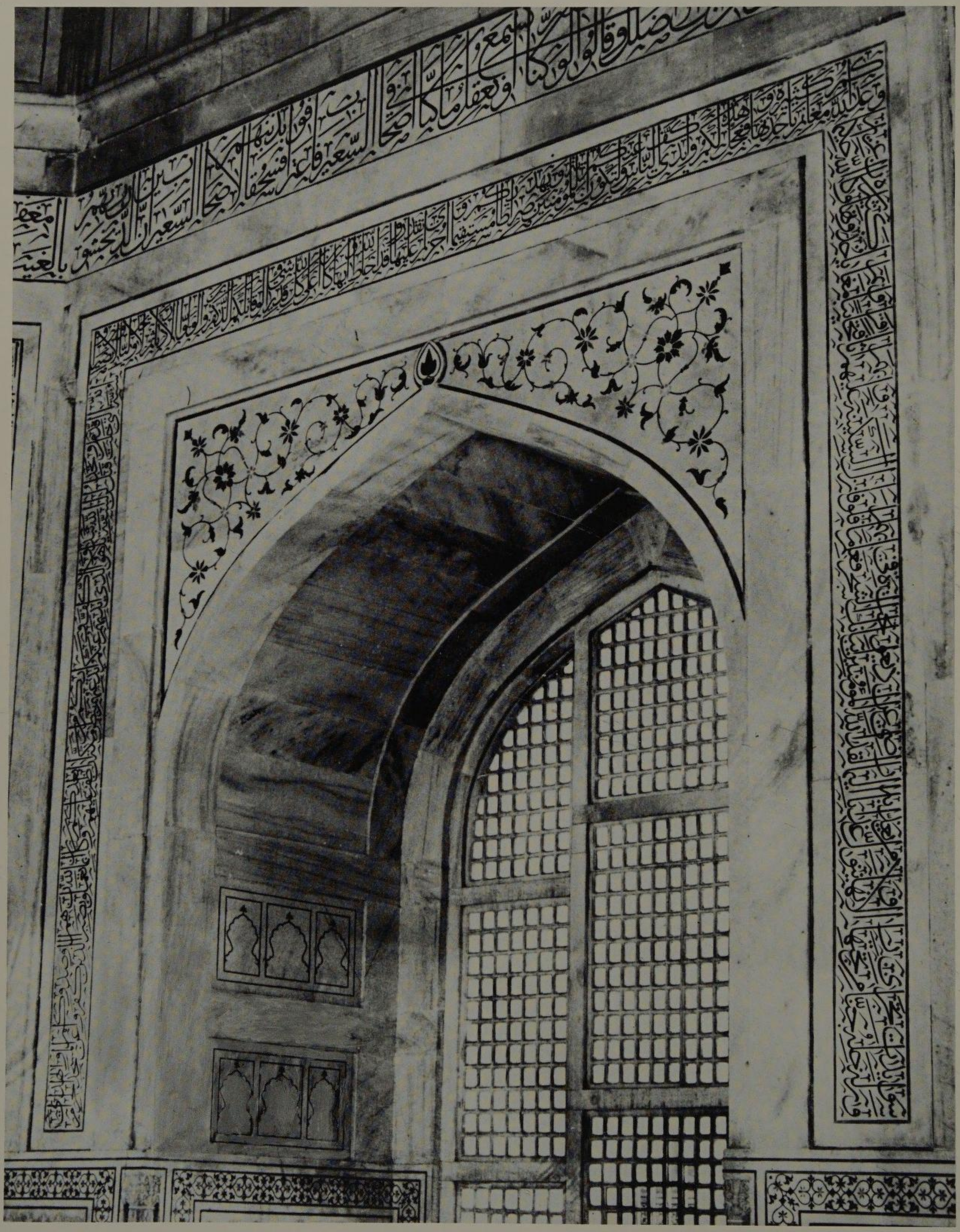
10. Verily those who plight their fealty to thee, do no less than plight their fealty to God--the Hand of God is over their hands! Then whosoever violates his oath, does so to the harm of his own soul; and whosoever fulfills what he has covenanted with God--God will soon grant him a great Reward!

11. The desert Arabs who lagged behind will say to thee: "We were occupied with our flocks, and herds, and families--do thou then ask Forgiveness for us!" They say with their tongues what is not in their hearts. Say: "Who shall avail anything for you from God, whether His Will is to inflict loss upon you, or extend to you an advantage? Nay! But God...

117. Northeast arch.

*Northeast Arch*

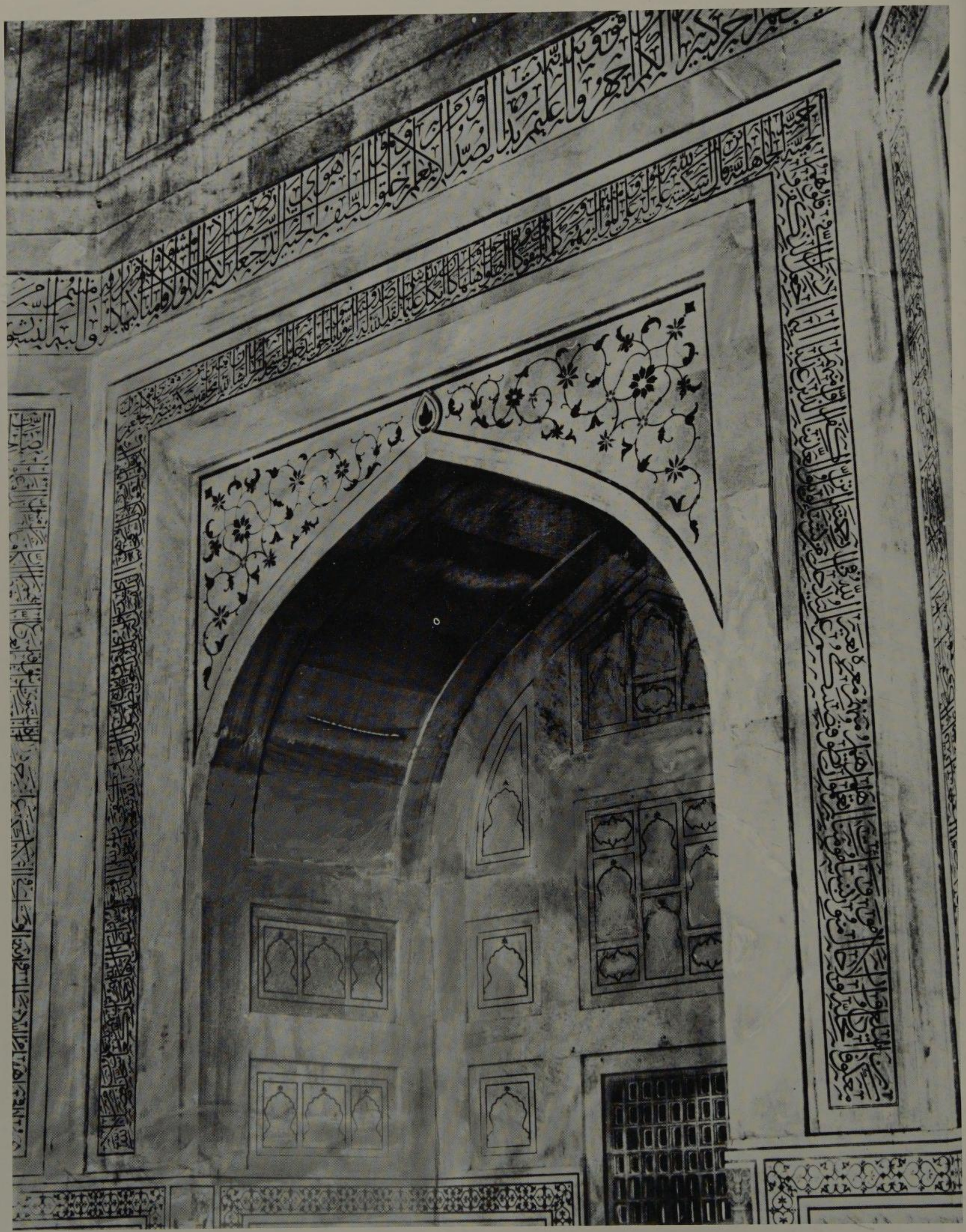
[11. cont.] ...is well acquainted with that which ye do!
12. "For truly, ye imagined that the Messenger and the believers would never return to their families, and your hearts were adorned with gladness and ye conceived evil thought--for ye are a corrupt people!"
13. Any if any believe not in God and His Messenger: We have prepared for the unbelievers a Blazing Fire!
14. To God belongs Dominion over the heavens and the earth! Whomsoever He will, He chastises--but God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.
15. Those who lagged behind will say, when ye go forth to take the spoil: "Permit us to follow you!" They wish to change God's decree. Say: "Ye shall by no means follow us; God hath declared this beforehand!" Then they will say: "Nay ye are jealous of us." Verily, but little do they understand!
16. Say to the desert Arabs who lagged behind: "Ye shall be summoned against a people given to vehement war; then shall ye fight them, or they shall submit. Then if ye show obedience, God will grant you a goodly Reward--but if ye turn back, as ye did before, He will punish you with a grievous Penalty!"
17. No blame shall there be on the blind, nor on the lame, nor on the sick-- But whosoever shall obey God...



118. North arch.

*North Arch*

[17. cont.] ...and His Messenger, He will admit him to Gardens of Paradise, beneath which rivers flow! But whosoever shall turn back, He will punish him with a grievous Penalty!
18. God's Good Pleasure was upon the Believers when they swore fealty to thee under the tree: He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down his *sechina* upon them, and He rewarded them with a speedy Victory!
19. And many spoils besides--for God is All-mighty, All-wise!
20. And God hath promised you the taking of many other gains; these He hath hastened to you, and He hath restrained the hands of men from you--that it may be a sign for the believers, and that He may guide you on a Straight Path.
21. And yet other gains which ye were not able to take: these hath God already encompassed--for God is powerful over everything.
22. If the unbelievers should fight you, they would certainly turn their backs; then neither protector nor helper would they find!
23. Such is God's practice established hitherto; and no alteration wilt thou find in the practice of God!
24. And it is He Who hath restrained their hands from you and your hands from them in the hollow of Mecca; after that He gave you the Victory over them--for God sees well all that ye do.
25. They are the ones who disbelieved and hindered you from entering the Sacred Mosque, and the offering...



119. Northwest arch.

*Northwest Arch*

[25. cont.] ...they prevented from arriving at the place of sacrifice. And had it not been that ye would have trodden down believers, both men and women whom ye knew not, thereby bringing guilt upon yourselves unknowingly on their account (that God may admit to his Mercy whom He will)--and had they been apart, We should certainly have punished the unbelievers among them with a grievous Punishment!

26. When the unbelievers had fostered up a raging zealotry in their hearts--the zealotry of heathen ignorance--God sent down His *sechina* unto His Messenger and the believers, and firmly established them in pious adherence; for they were most worthy and deserving--and God hath knowledge of all things!

27. Truly hath God fulfilled the vision He vouchsafed to his Messenger: "Ye shall surely enter the Sacred Mosque, if God will, in full security, having your heads shaved, your hair cut short, and without fear--for He knoweth what ye know not, and hath appointed beforehand a speedy Victory."

28. It is He Who hath sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of Truth, and He may uplift it above every religion--and God sufficeth as a witness:

29. Muhammad is the Messenger of God; and those who are with him are vehement against the unbelievers, but compassionate towards one another. Thou mayest see them bowing down, prostrate, seeking Bounty from God...

120. West arch.

*West Arch*

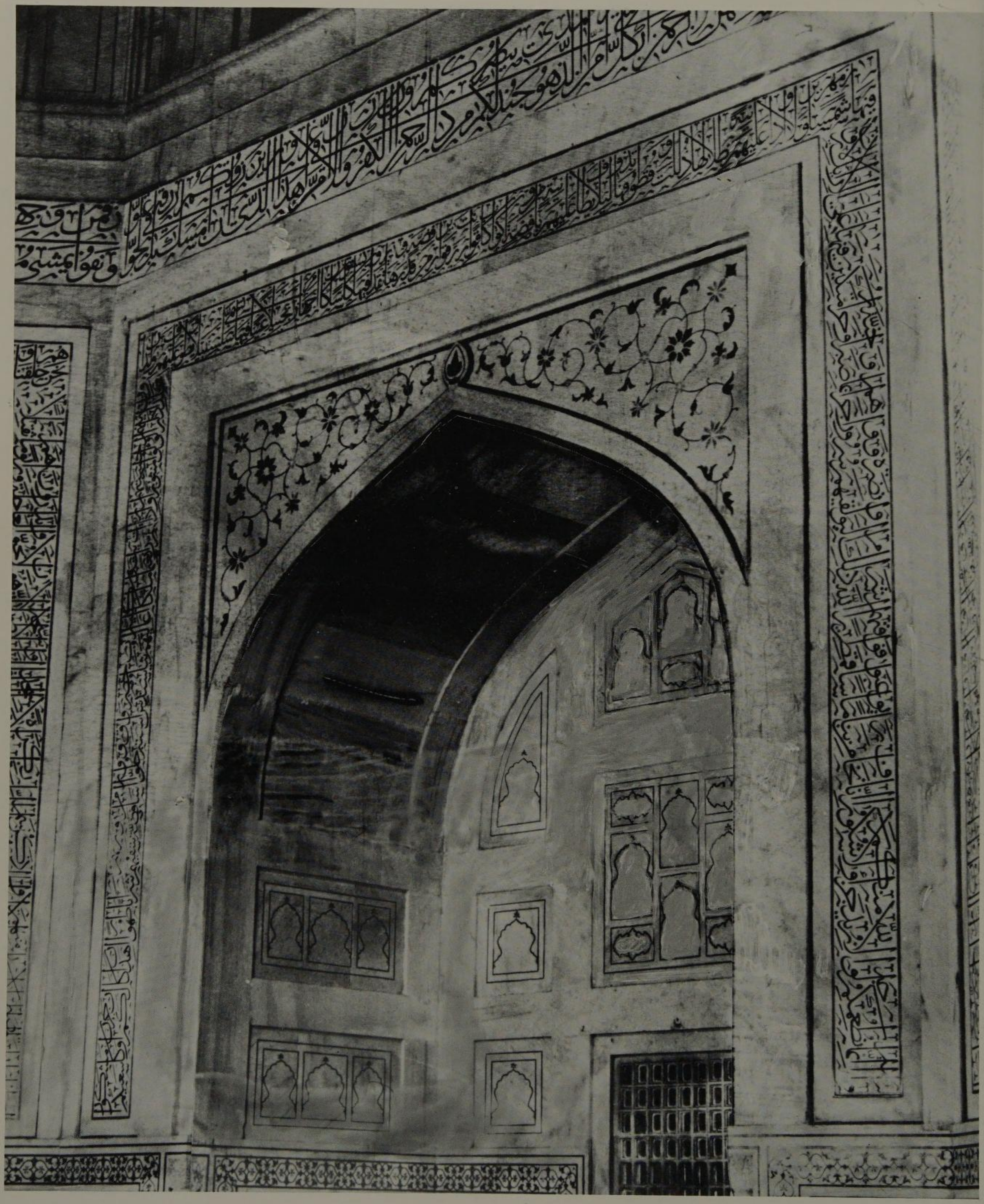
[29. cont.] ...and His Good Pleasure. The mark of them is upon their foreheads, the traces of their prostration; that is their similitude in the Torah. And in the Gospel, their similitude is: like a seed which sendeth forth its shoot, then strengthens it; and it groweth thick and riseth straight upon its stalk, delighting the sowers--that the unbelievers may swell with indignation at them. And to such of them as believe and do deeds of righteousness, hath God promised Forgiveness and immense Reward.

*West Arch* (beginning at upper right of arch)

**12.** [SURA 76: *AL-INSAN*, "MAN"]

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

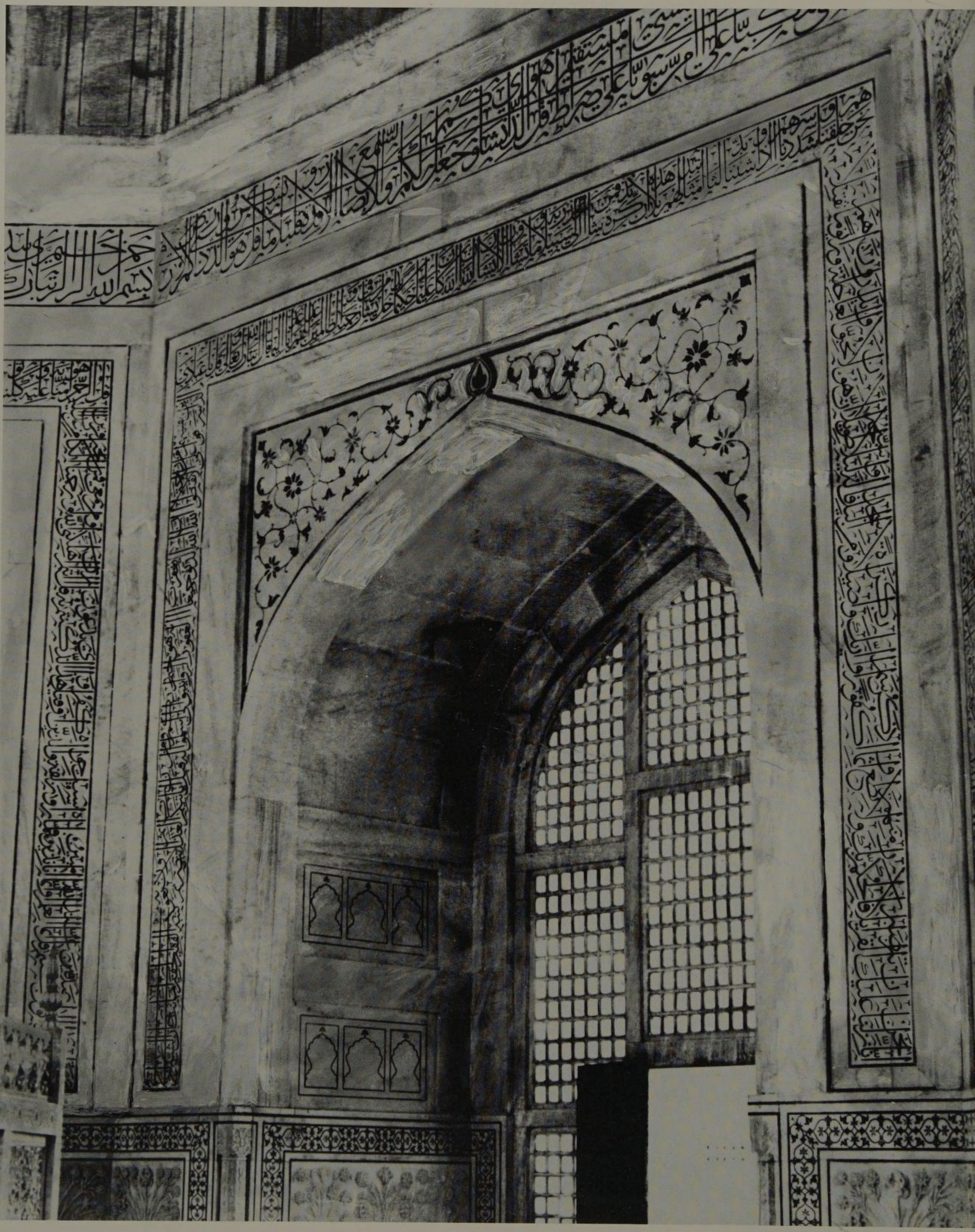
1. Has there come upon Man a space of Time when he was a thing unremembered?
2. Verily, We have created Man from a drop of mingled sperm, in order to try him; and We have made him to hear and to see.
3. Verily, We have shown him the Way, whether he be thankful or unthankful.
4. For the unbelievers have We prepared chains, carcans, and a Blazing Fire.
5. But the Righteous shall drink of a cup mixed with camphor--
6. A Fountain whereat the devotees of God do drink, causing it to flow forth in unstinted abundance.
7. They fulfill vows and they fear a Day, the evil whereof flies far and wide.
8. And they give food, for love of Him, to the indigent, the orphan...



121. Southwest arch.

*Southwest Arch*

[8. cont.] ...and the captive--
9. "We do feed you for the Face of God alone; no recompense do we desire from you, nor thankfulness;
10. "Verily we dread from our Lord a stern and calamitous Day!"
11. Wherefore God shall deliver them from the evil of that Day, and shall bestow upon them radiance of Countenance and Joy;
12. And He shall reward their constancy with Garden, and silk:
13. Therein shall they recline upon raised couches; therein shall they know neither sun nor piercing cold.
14. And the shades thereof shall be close over them, and low shall its fruits hang down;
15. And therein shall be passed amongst them vessels of silver and goblets of crystal--
16. Crystal-like, of silver, whereof they shall determine the measure;
17. And therein shall they be given to drink of a Cup mixed with ginger,
18. From the fountain called *Salsabil*:
19. And youths of everlasting youth shall go round amongst them--when thou seest them, thou shalt think them scattered pearls,
20. And when thou lookest, there shalt thou behold Bliss and a realm magnificent!
21. Upon them shall be green garments of fine silk and heavy brocade; and they shall be adorned with bracelets of silver; and of a pure beverage shall their Lord give them to drink.
22. "Verily, this is a Reward for you, and your Endeavor is accepted and recognized!"



122. South arch.

*South Arch*

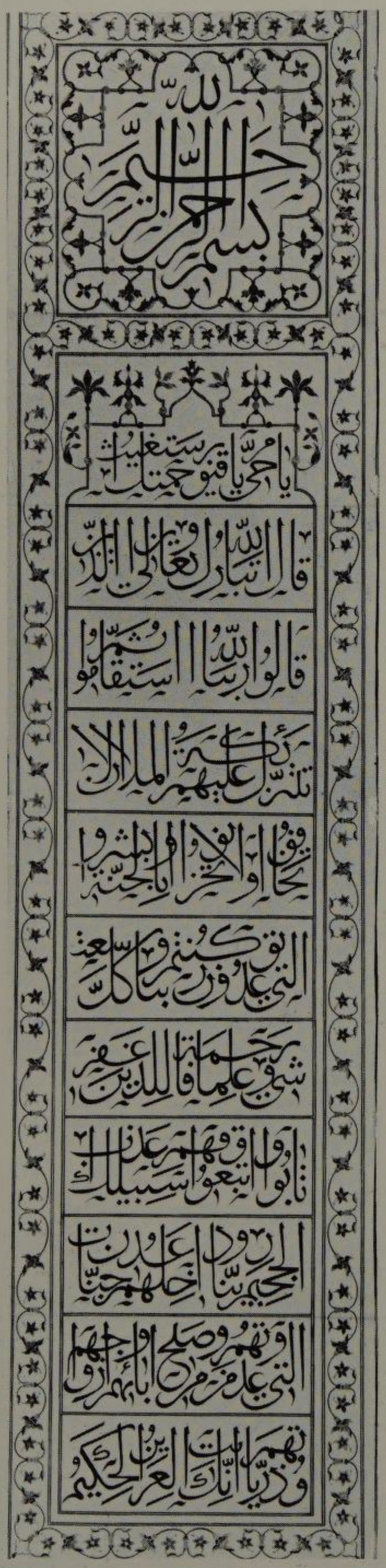
23. Verily, it is We Who have sent down the Qur'an unto thee, as a Revelation!
24. Wherefore patiently await the Judgment of thy Lord, and hearken not unto the wicked and unbelieving amongst them;
25. And celebrate the Name of thy Lord in the morning and in the evening;
26. And part of the night, prostrate thyself before Him; and glorify Him a long night through!
27. Yet verily, these do love the fleeting world, and put away behind them the grievous Day!
28. It is We Who have created them, and We have made their joints strong--yet when We will, We shall substitute others like unto them, in their stead.
29. This is an admonition: whosoever willeth, let him take a Path unto his Lord--
30. But will ye shall not, except as God wills; for God verily is All-knowing, All-wise.
31. He shall admit unto His Mercy whom he will; but the wrong-doers--for them hath He prepared a grievous Penalty!

**13.** [SURA 39: *AL-ZUMAR*, "THE TROOPS"]

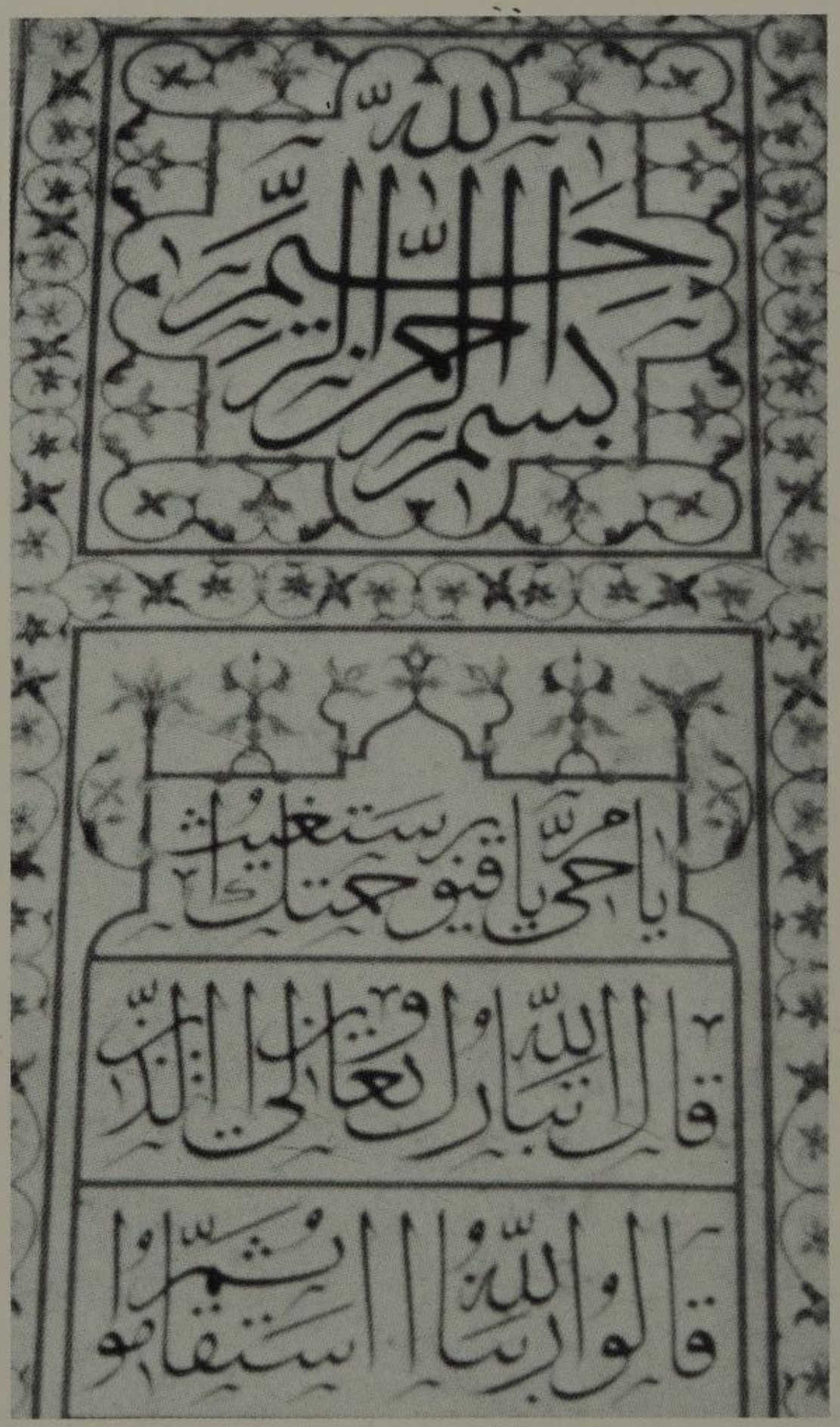
*Said the Blessed and Great God--*

53. Say: "O My Servants who have transgressed against your own souls! Despair not of the Mercy of God, for God forgives all sins: verily He is the All-forgiving, the All-compassionate!
54. "And return ye unto your Lord, and to Him resign yourselves, before the Penalty cometh upon you: for then ye shall not be helped!"

[HISTORICAL INSCRIPTION NO. 5:] *"Finished with His help; written by the humble faqir Amanat Khan al-Shirazi, in the year one thousand and forty-eight Hijri, and the twelfth of His Majesty's august accession."*



123. Nineteenth-century drawing of top of upper cenotaph of Mumtaz Mahal. British Library.



124. Detail of top of upper cenotaph.

CENOTAPH OF MUMTAZ MAHAL IN THE UPPER HALL

*Top of Cenotaph (beginning at northern end)*

**14.** [SURA 41: *HA MIM*, OR *AL-FUSSILAT*, "THE EXPLANATION"]

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.
*O Living, O Eternal, I beseech Thy Mercy! Said the Blessed and Great God--*
30. Verily those who say, "Our Lord is God!"; and further stand straight and steadfast; unto them the Angels shall descend, saying: "Fear ye not! Neither be ye grieved! But rejoice ye in the Paradise which ye have been promised!"

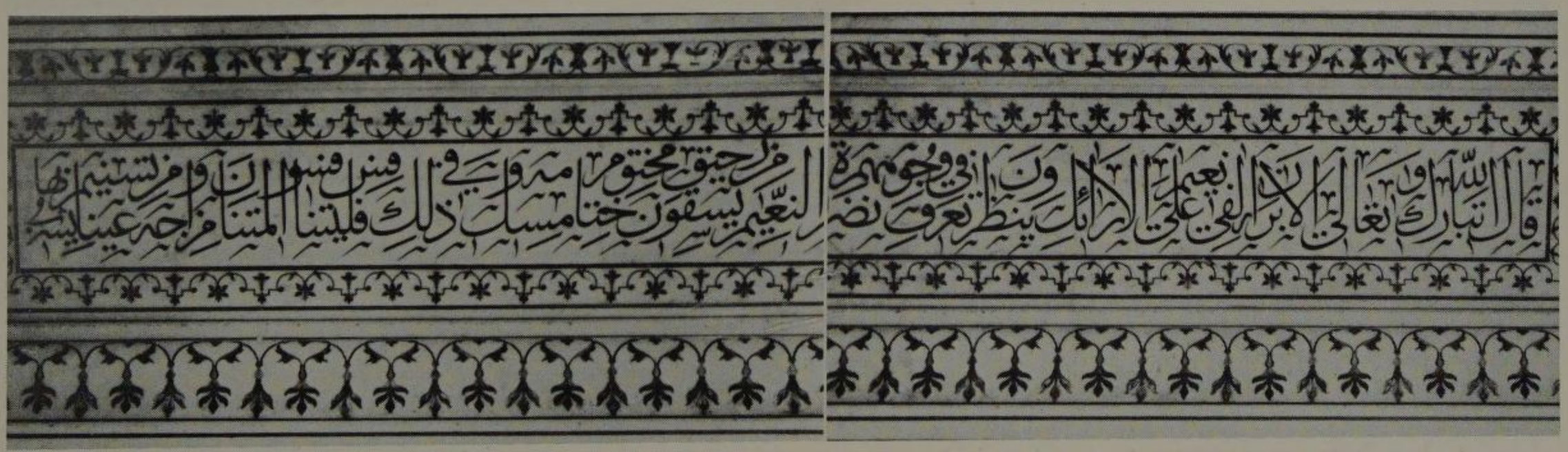
**15.** [SURA 40: *AL-MU'MIN*, "THE BELIEVER"]

7. "O Lord! Thy Reach is over all things, in Mercy and Knowledge. Forgive, then, those who turn in Repentance, and follow Thy Path; and preserve them from the Penalty of the Blazing Fire!
8. "And allow them, O Lord! to enter the Gardens of Eden which Thou hast promised unto them, and unto the righteous among their fathers, their wives, and their posterity!--for Thou art surely the All-mighty, the All-wise!"

*East Side of Cenotaph*

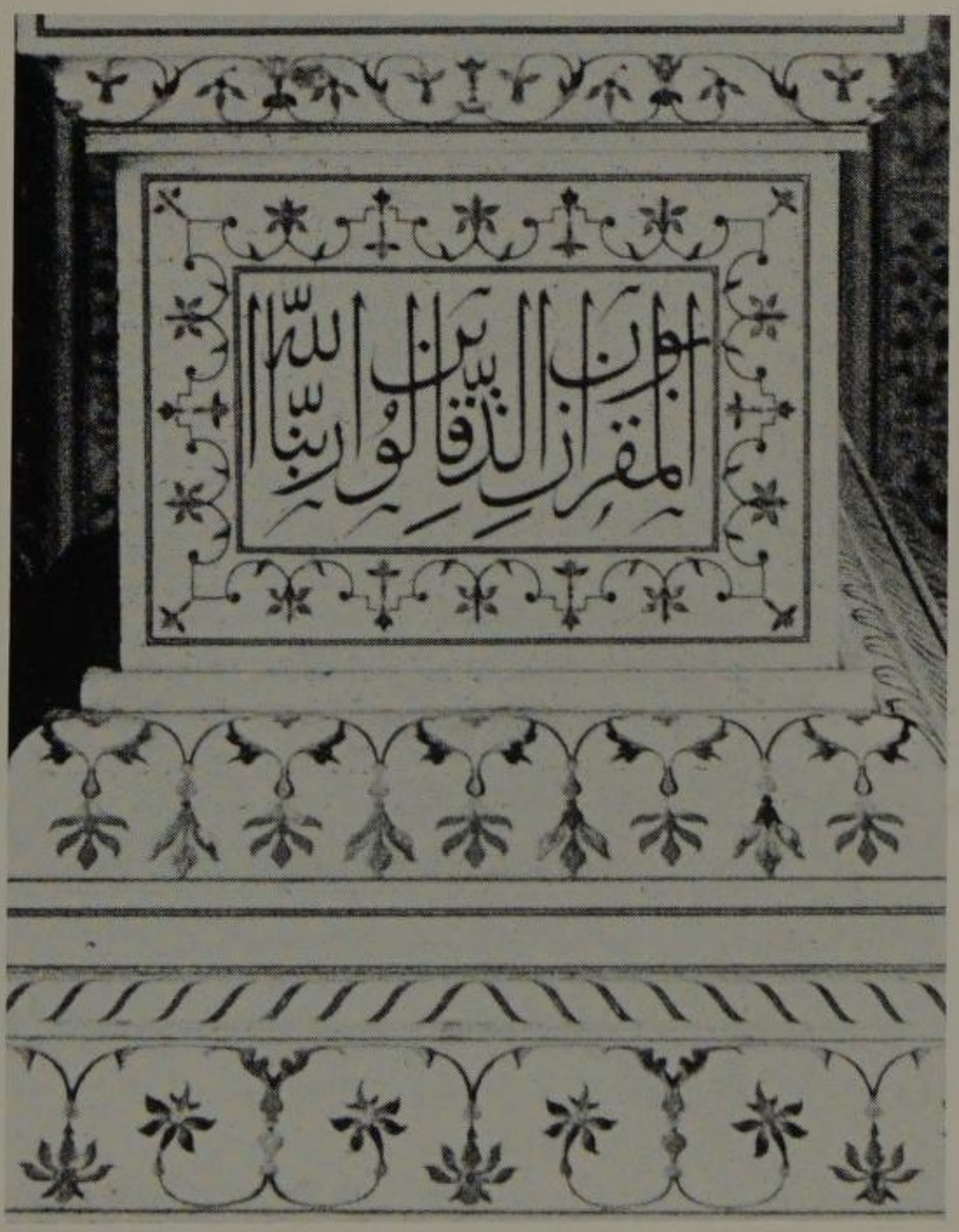
**16.** [SURA 83: *AL-TATFIF*, "THE SHORT MEASURE"]

*Said the Almighty--*
22. Truly the righteous shall be in Bliss,
23. Upon raised couches, gazing--
24. Thou shalt observe in their faces the radiancy of Bliss!
25. They shall be given to drink of a pure wine, sealed:
26. The seal whereof shall be musk--and for this, let those aspire who have aspirations!--
27. And mingled therewith shall be the waters of *Tasnim*:
28. A Fountain whereat do drink...

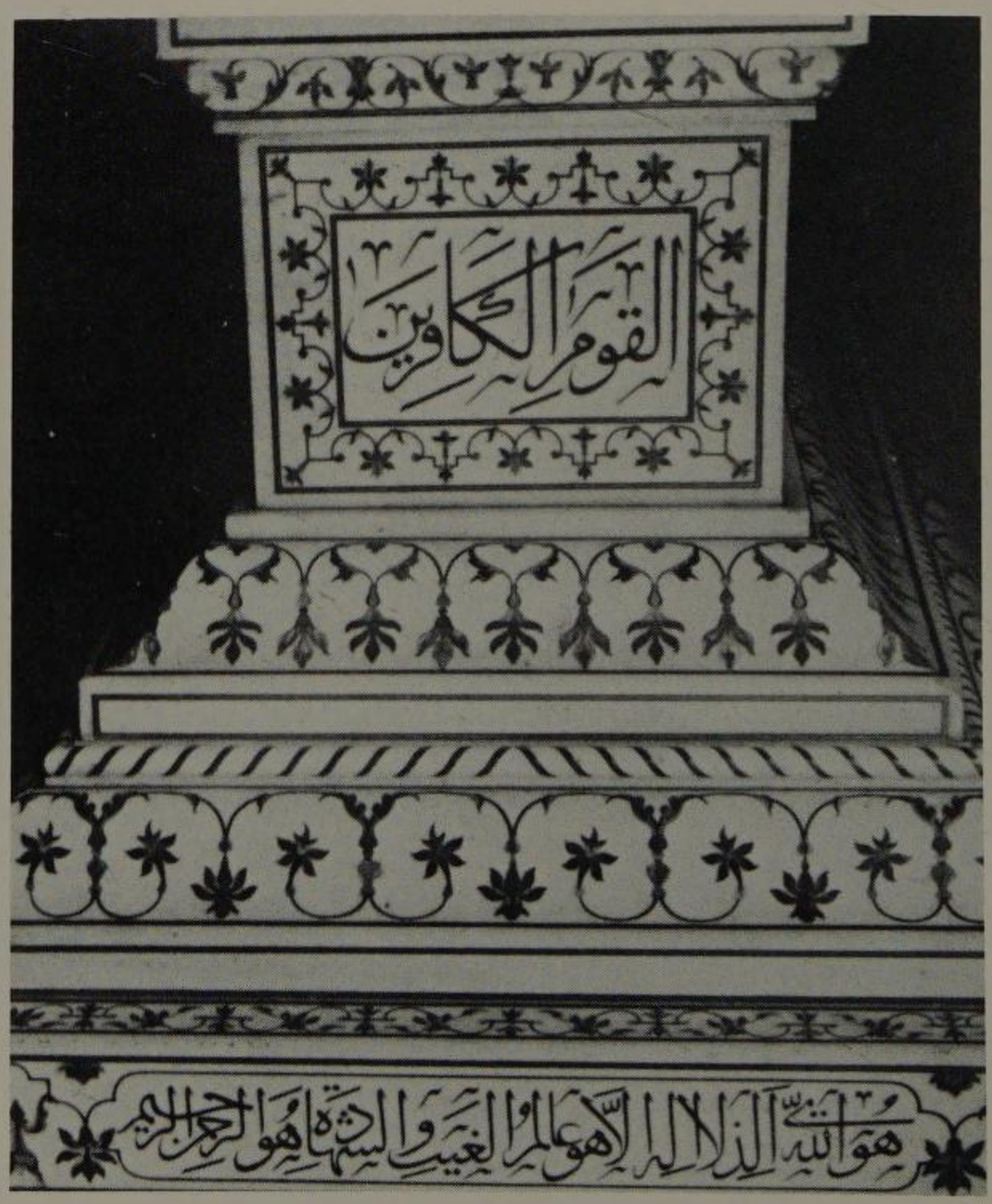


125. East side of upper cenotaph.

126. Upper cenotaph of Mumtaz Mahal, facing northwest.



127. South end of upper cenotaph.



128. North end of upper cenotaph.

*South End*

[28. cont.] ...Those Nearest unto God!

**17.** [SURA 41: *HA MIM*, OR *AL-FUSSILAT*, "THE EXPLANATION"]

30. Verily those who say, "Our Lord is God!"...

*West Side*

[30. cont.]...And further, stand straight and steadfast; unto them the Angels shall descend, saying: "Fear ye not! Neither be ye grieved! But rejoice ye in the Paradise which ye have been promised!"

**18.** [SURA 2: *AL-BAQARAH*, "THE COW"]

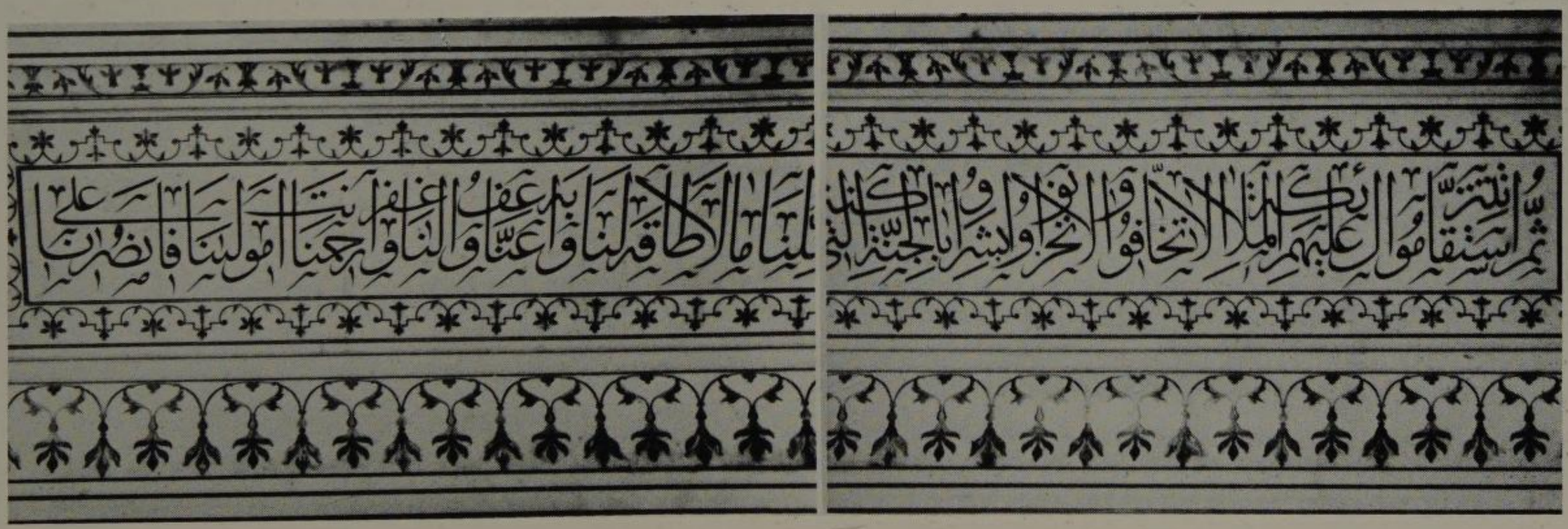
286. "O Lord! Place not upon us a burden greater than we have strength to bear! Blot out our sins, and grant us Forgiveness! Have Mercy upon us! Thou art our Protector: help us therefore against...

*North End*

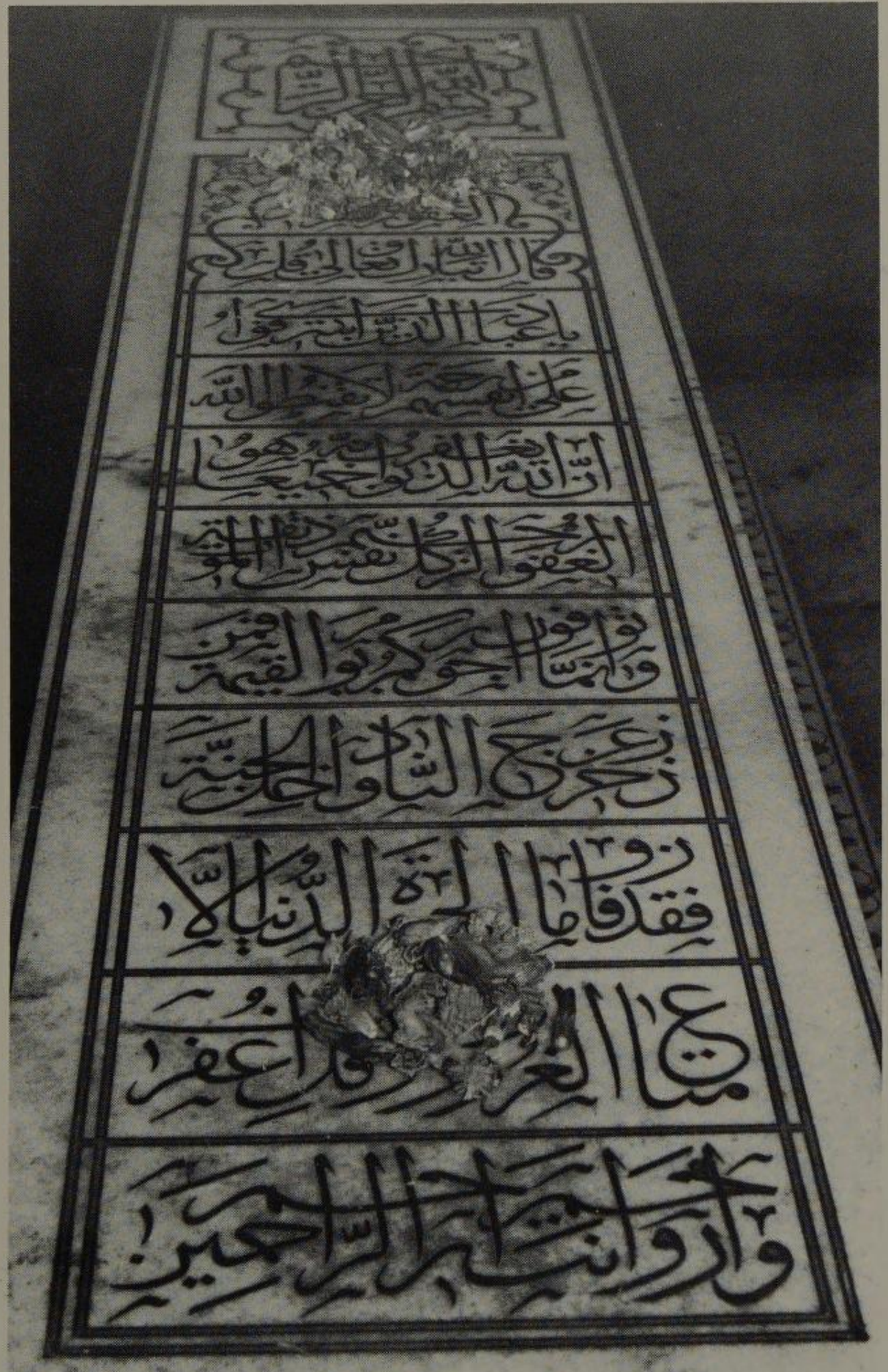
[286. cont.]...the people of the unbelievers!"

**19.** [SURA 59: *AL-HASHR*, "THE ASSEMBLY"

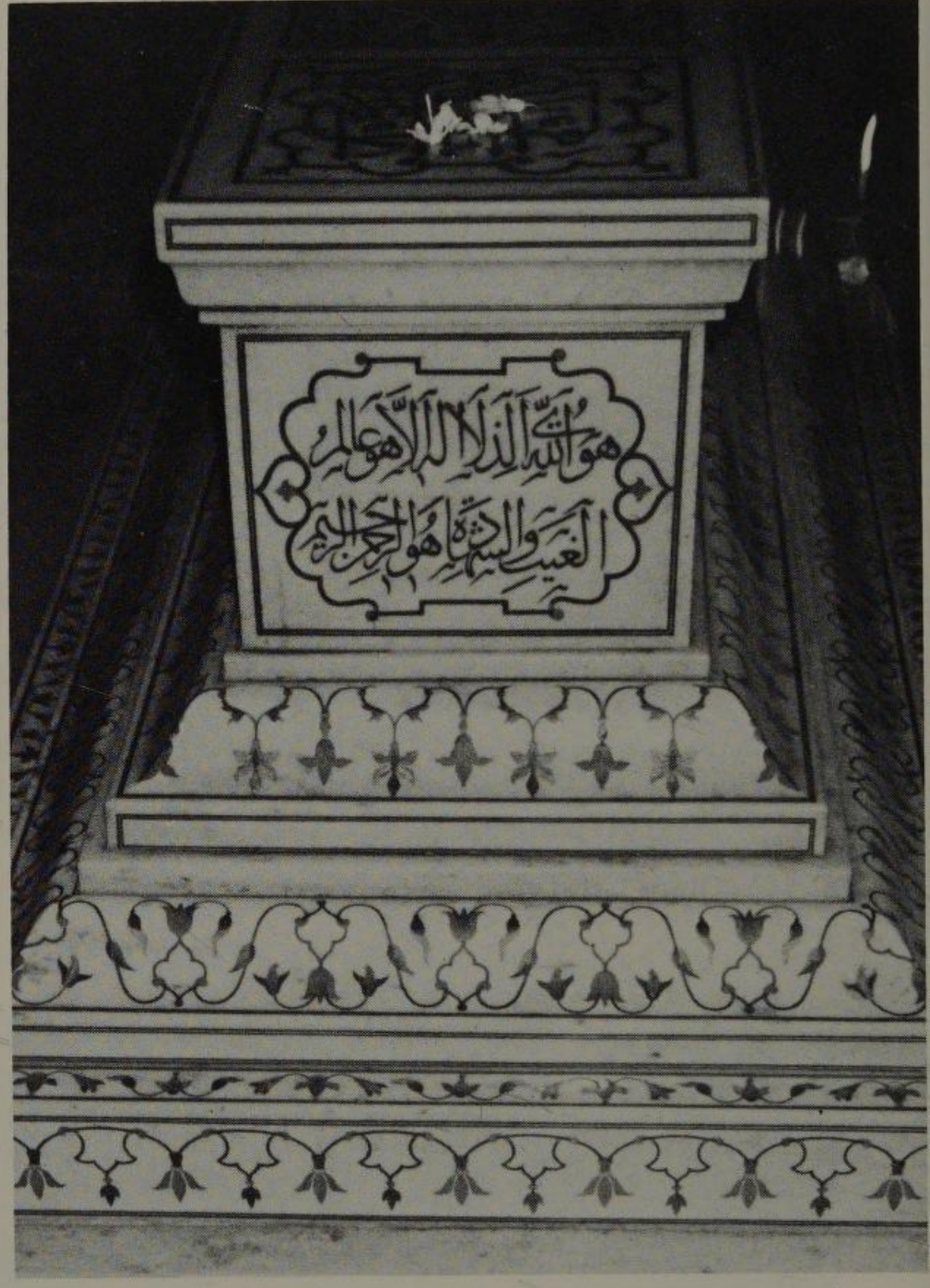
22. He is God! beside Whom there is no god! He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen! He is the All-merciful, the All-compassionate!



129. West side of upper cenotaph.



130. Top of lower cenotaph of Mumtaz Mahal.



131. North end of lower cenotaph.

CENOTAPH OF MUMTAZ MAHAL IN THE CRYPT

*Top of Cenotaph* (beginning at northern end)

**20.** [SURA 39: *AL-ZUMAR*, "THE TROOPS"]

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.
*Said the Blessed and Great God--*

53. Say: "O My Servants who have transgressed against your own souls! Despair not of the Mercy of God, for God forgives all sins: verily He is the All-forgiving, the All-compassionate!"

**21.** [SURA 3: *ALI 'IMRAN*, "THE FAMILY OF 'IMRAN"]

185. Every soul shall taste of death; and verily, on the Day of Resurrection, shall ye receive your full recompense! And whosoever shall be far removed from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, shall attain the triumph--for the life of this world is but the comfort of illusion!

**22.** [SURA 28: *AL-MU'MINUN*, "THE BELIEVERS"]

118. And say: "O my Lord! Grant Thou Forgiveness and Mercy! For Thou art the Best of those who show mercy!"

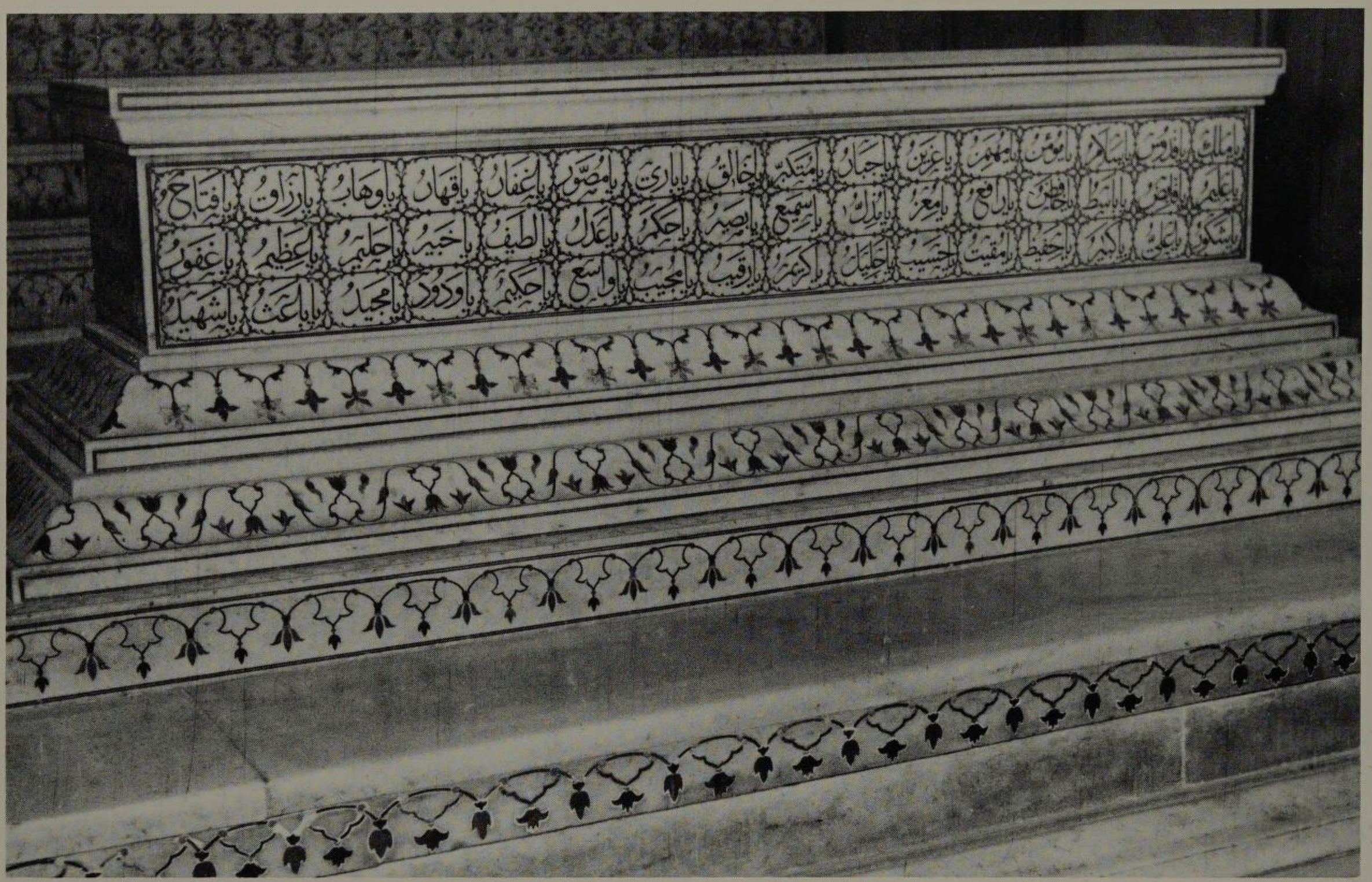
*South End*

[HISTORICAL INSCRIPTION NO. 2: *"The illumined grave of Arjumand Banu Begam, entitled Mumtaz Mahal, who died in the year 1040"*

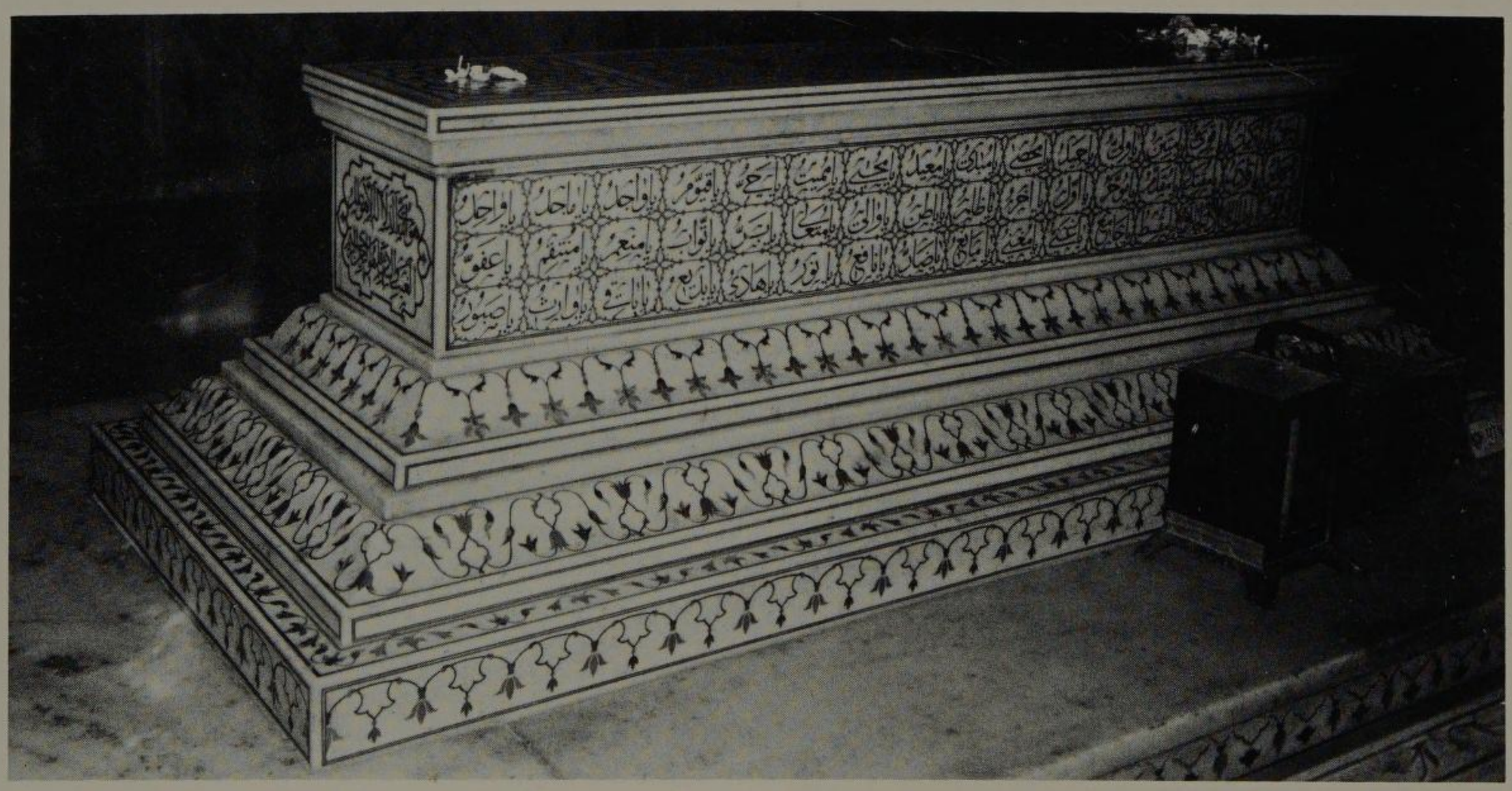
*North End*

**23.** [SURA 59: *AL-HASHR*, "THE ASSEMBLY"]

22. He is God! beside Whom there is no god! He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen! He is the All-merciful, the All-compassionate!



132. East side of lower cenotaph.



133. West side of lower cenotaph.

*East and West Sides of the Cenotaph*

**24.** [THE NINETY-NINE NAMES OF GOD: total includes three names from preceding passage: God (*Allah*); the Merciful (*al-Rahman*); the Compassionate (*al-Rahim*)]

EAST SIDE: *First Row*

1. O King (*ya Malik*)
2. O Holy (*ya Quddus*)
3. O Peace (*ya Salam*)
4. O Believer (*ya Mu'min*)
5. O Protector (*ya Muhaymin*)
6. O Powerful (*ya 'Aziz*)
7. O Restorer (*ya Jabbar*)
8. O Imposing (*ya Mutakabbir*)
9. O Creator (*ya Khaliq*)
10. O Maker (*ya Bari'*)
11. O Fashioner (*ya Musawwir*)
12. O Pardoner (*ya Ghaffar*)
13. O Dominant (*ya Qahhar*)
14. O Bestower (*ya Wahhab*)
15. O Provider (*ya Razzak*)
16. O Revealer (*ya Fattah*)

*Second Row*

17. O Knower (*ya 'Alim*)
18. O Restrainer (*ya Kabid*)
19. O Expander (*ya Basit*)
20. O Humbler (*ya Khafid*)
21. O Exalter (*ya Rafi'*)
22. O Honorer (*ya Mu'izz*)
23. O Abaser (*ya Mudhill*)
24. O Hearer (*ya Sami'*)
25. O Seer (*ya Basir*)
26. O Presider (*ya Hakam*)
27. O Just (*ya 'Adil*)
28. O Benevolent (*ya Latif*)
29. O Sagacious (*ya Khabir*)
30. O Clement (*ya Halim*)
31. O Magnificent (*ya 'Azim*)
32. O Forgiving (*ya Ghafur*)

*Third Row*

33. O Grateful (*ya Shakur*)
34. O Exalted (*ya 'Ali*)
35. O Great (*ya Kabir*)
36. O Vigilant (*ya Hafiz*)
37. O Strengthener (*ya Muqit*)
38. O Reckoner (*ya Hasib*)
39. O Majestic (*ya Jalil*)
40. O Generous (*ya Karim*)
41. O Watcher (*ya Rakib*)
42. O Approver (*ya Mujib*)
43. O All-embracing (*ya Wasi'*)
44. O Wise (*ya Hakim*)
45. O Loving (*ya Wadud*)
46. O Glorious (*ya Majid*)
47. O Reviver (*ya Ba'ith*)
48. O Witness (*ya Shahid*)

WEST SIDE: *First Row*

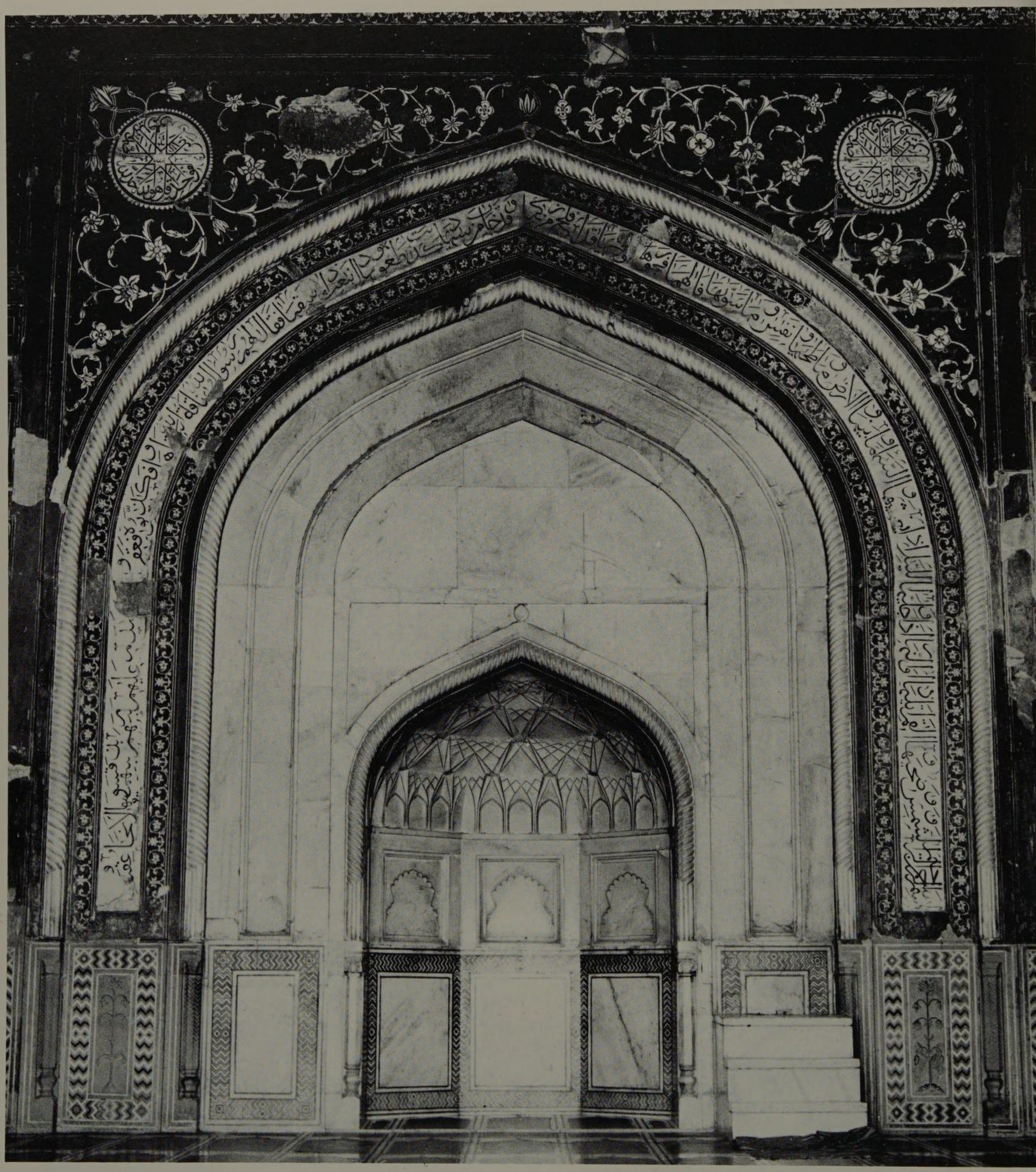
49. O Truth (ya Haqq)
50. O Advocate (ya Wakil
51. O Strong (ya Qawi)
52. O Firm (ya Matin)
53. O Guardian (ya Wali)
54. O Worthy (ya Hamid)
55. O Numberer (ya Muhsi)
56. O Innovator (ya Mudbi')
57. O Renewer (ya Mu'id)
58. O Quickener (ya Muhyi)
59. O Destroyer (ya Mumit)
60. O Living (ya Hayy)
61. O Eternal (ya Qayyum)
62. O Opulent (ya Wajid)
63. O Noble (ya Majid)
64. O Unique (ya Wahid)

*Second Row*

65. O Impenetrable (ya Samad)
66. O Powerful (ya Qadir)
67. O All-powerful (ya Muqtadir)
68. O Attracter (ya Muqaddim)
69. O Repeller (ya Mu'akhkhir)
70. O First (ya Awwal)
71. O Last (ya Akhir)
72. O Evident (ya Zahir)
73. O Hidden (ya Batin)
74. O Reigning (ya Wali)
75. O Exalted (ya Muta'ali)
76. O Righteous (ya Barr)
77. O Favorer (ya Tawwab)
78. O Benefactor (ya Mun'im)
79. O Avenger (ya Muntaqim)
80. O Pardoner (ya 'Afu)

*Third Row*

81. O Kind (ya Ra'uf)
82. O Ruler of the Kingdom (ya Malik al-Mulk)
83. O Lord of Majesty and Generosity (ya Dhu'l-Jalal wa'l-Ikram)
84. O Equitable (ya Muqsit)
85. O Assembler (ya Jami')
86. O Independent (ya Ghani)
87. O Enricher (ya Mughni)
88. O Defender (ya Mani')
89. O Afflicter (ya Darr)
90. O Benefitter (ya Nafi')
91. O Light (ya Nur)
92. O Guide (ya Hadi)
93. O Incomparable (ya Badi')
94. O Enduring (ya Baqi)
95. O Inheritor (ya Warith)
96. O Patient (ya Subur)



134. Mihrab wall of mosque.

MOSQUE

*Mihrab*

**25.** [SURA 91: *AL-SHAMS*, "THE SUN"]

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.
1. By the Sun and its splendor!
2. By the Moon which followeth after!
3. By the Day which revealeth the splendor!
4. By the Night which concealeth!
5. By the Heaven and Him Who built it!
6. By the Earth and Him Who spread it forth!
7. By the Soul and Him Who shaped it,
8. And enlightened it as to its wickedness and piety!--
9. Truly prosperous is he who hath purified it,
10. And failed is he who hath corrupted it!
11. The Thamud rejected the message of the Lord out of excessive impiety,
12. When behold! the most wicked among them was delegated;
13. Then the messenger of God said unto them: "It is the camel of God! Wherefore hinder her not from drinking!"
14. But they rejected him, and they hamstrung her; so their Lord crushed them for their sin, and levelled them--
15. And for Him is no fear of the consequence thereof!

*West Wall* (two inscribed disks above the mihrab)

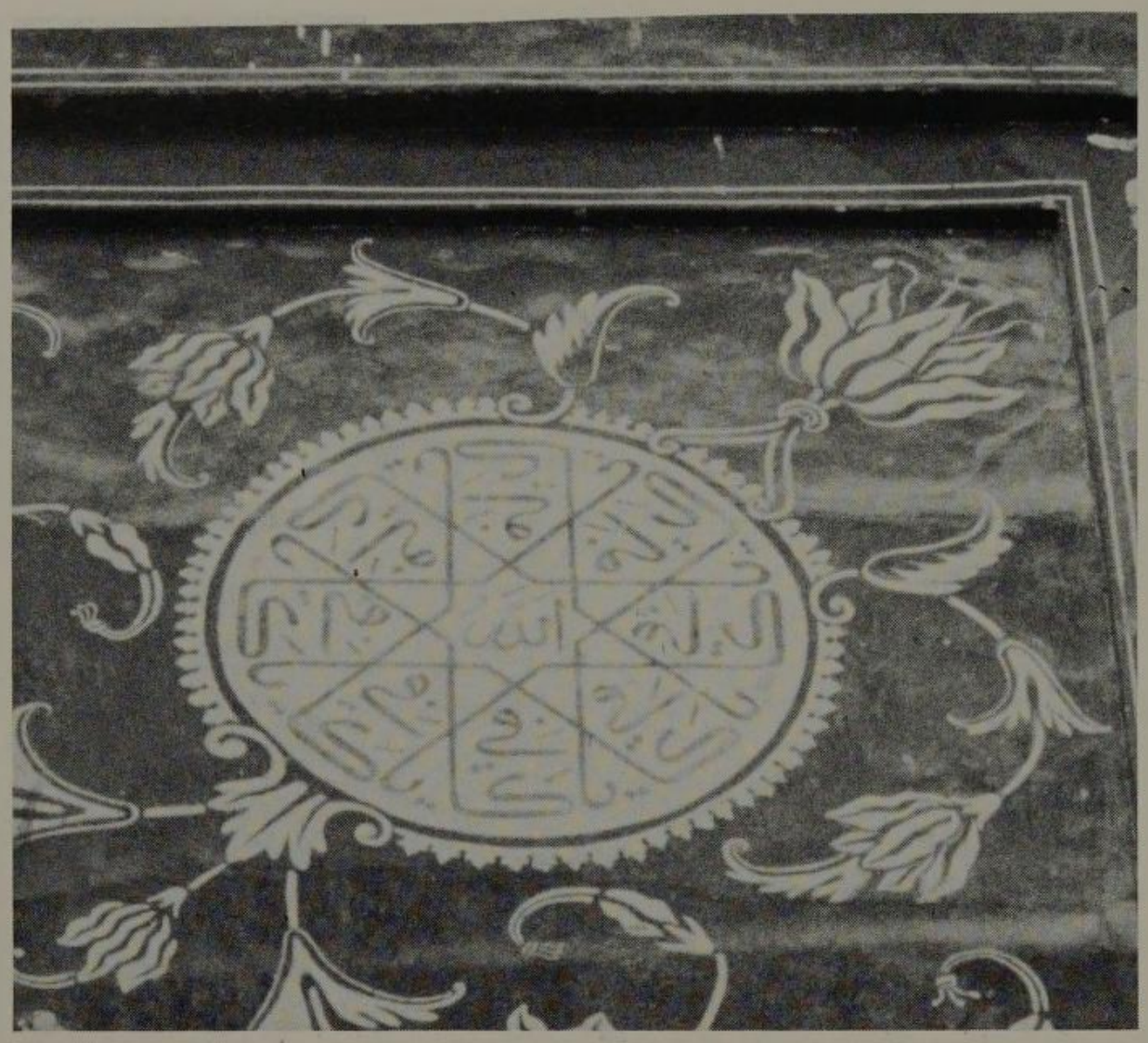
**26.** [SURA 112: *AL-IKHLAS*, "THE SINCERITY, OR *AL-TAUHID*, "THE UNITY"]

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.
1. Say: "He is God! The One!
2. "God is Eternal!
3. "He begetteth not, nor is He begotten!
4. "And there is none like unto Him!"

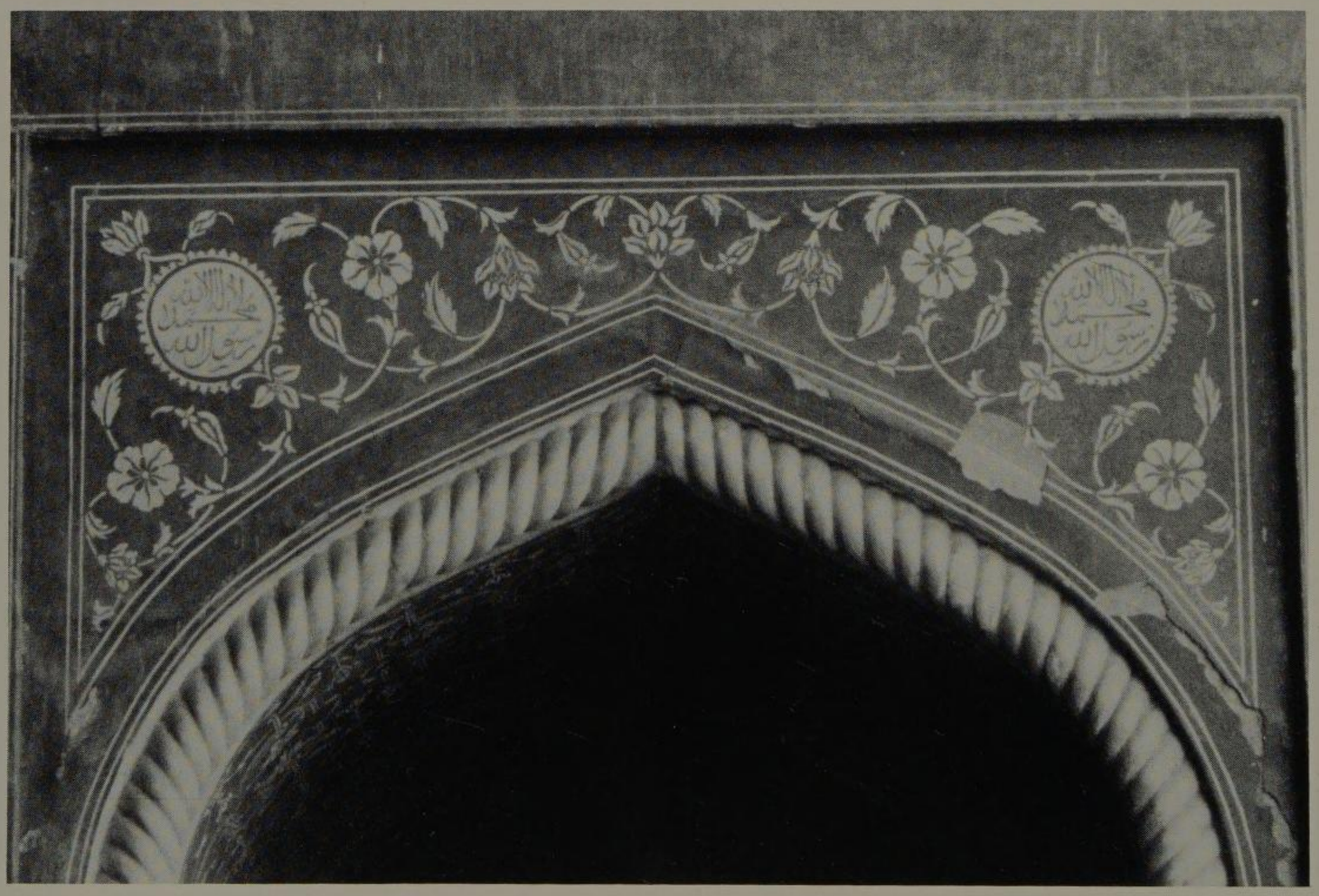
*Other Walls*

**27.** [Numerous inscribed disks, with each word repeated eight times on each disk:] "O God, O Sufficient" ("*Allah*; *Ya Kafi*)

**28.** [Several disks inscribed with the *Kalima*:] "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is His Messenger."



135. Mosque, detail of inscribed disk.



136. Mosque, detail of inscribed disks.

# PART IV

# THE CALLIGRAPHER AMANAT KHAN

137. Taj Mahal, detail of Qur'anic calligraphy on south arch, Sura 36, *Ya Sin*, v. 21.

# 35

# REFERENCES TO AMANAT KHAN IN MUGHAL HISTORIES

[This chapter presents in chronological order the few references to Amanat Khan contained in Lahori, Salih, and other Mughal historical sources. Along with his calligraphic inscriptions on other architectural monuments, assembled in Chapter 36, these references allow a fairly detailed reconstruction of his entire career--although not as detailed as that of his more famous brother Afzal Khan, Shah Jahan's highly trusted Prime Minister. Both brothers apparently arrived in India from their native Shiraz around 1608, and shortly thereafter Amanat Khan, then known as 'Abd al-Haqq, was appointed by Jahangir to design the calligraphy on the tomb of Akbar at Sikandra--which task he completed in 1613. Although not mentioned in the histories, he apparently held some office in the royal library, both under Jahangir and Shah Jahan, as attested by a fair number of his inspection seals noticed on manuscripts in various libraries and museums.

[Under Shah Jahan, 'Abd al-Haqq first receives mention in Sha'ban 1040/March 1631, when he successfully completed the diplomatic task assigned to him--escorting the Persian ambassador Muhammad 'Ali Beg to Burhanpur from Panipat via Akbarabad. The next mention occurs in June 1632, one year after the death of Mumtaz Mahal, when Shah Jahan reaches the outskirts of Akbarabad and awards 'Abd al-Haqq a mansab rank of 900/200, and the noble title of Amanat Khan ("Lord of Trust"). During the period 1632 to 1637, Amanat Khan appears to have worked continuously on the calligraphy on the tomb, for which Shah Jahan honored him, in Sha'ban 1047/December 1637, with the gift of an elephant.

[Shortly after Afzal Khan died at Lahore in early January 1639, Shah Jahan granted Amanat Khan an audience to offer condolences to him and his two sons--the eldest of whom, 'Inayat Allah, had been previously adopted by his brother. Amanat Khan appears to have been so deeply grieved by his brother's death that he resigned his rank and duties and retired to a place near Lahore, where he built a caravansarai in 1050/1640-41, and later died sometime in Shah Jahan's eighteenth regnal year, corresponding to 1054-55/1644-45.]

## 35.1. LAHORI

**[Ia, p. 366]** And on the 18th of Sha'ban 1040 [22 March 1631], . . . 'Abd al-Haqq, brother of 'Allami Afzal Khan, who, in obedience to the order having the force of Destiny, had gone from the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad to receive [the Iran ambassador] Muhammad 'Ali Beg at Panipat, first escorting him to Akbarabad and then to Burhanpur, and who had all along the way fulfilled the requisites of hospitality, now also obtained the honor of making his obeisance.

**[p. 428]** On the 1st of Zi'l-Hijja 1041 [19 June 1632], corresponding to the 3rd of Khurdad, . . . Makramat Khan was favored with an increase of 500 *zat* and 200 *suwar*, and promoted to the mansab rank of 1,500 *zat* and 600 *suwar*. And 'Abd al-Haqq, brother of 'Allami Afzal Khan **[p. 429]** was granted the title of Amanat Khan.

**[p. 535]** [On 26 Muharram 1043/2 August 1633,] Amanata Khan, brother of 'Allami Afzal Khan, was honored with an increased mansab of 1,000 *zat* and 100 *suwar*.

**[II, p. 8]** On the 1st of Sha'ban 1047 [19 December 1637], Amanat Khan, whose naskh calligraphy (*naskh-khatt-i-u*) has drawn the line [cypher] of cancellation (*khatt-i-naskh*) across the pages of the naskh-writers of the day, had his desires fulfilled with the grant of an elephant, as a reward for the inscription which he had written inside

the sky-high dome (*gumbad*) of the sky-high tomb (*mazar*) of Her late Majesty Mumtaz al-Zamani.

**[p. 132-3]** [Four days after the death of Afzal Khan,] on the 16th of Ramazan 1048 [21 January 1639], Amanat Khan, brother of Afzal Khan, and his two sons 'Inayat Allah--whom that divinely pardoned Khan had adopted as his own son--and Faiz Allah, were exalted by the bestowal of robes of honor. . . . **[p. 133-4]** And through an increase in rank, Amanat Khan was favored with a mansab of 1,000 *zat* and 200 *suwar*; and his son 'Inayat Allah had his head raised in pride through appointment to the post of Reviser of Petitions (*'arz-i-mukarrar*).

**[p. 413]** On the 1st of Safar 1055 [29 March 1645], the environs of Sarai Amanat Khan [built by Amanat Khan in 1050/1640-41] became the camping ground of His Majesty's cavalcade of fortune.

**[p. 737]** [LIST OF MANSABDARS] Amanat Khan, brother of Afzal Khan: 1,000 *zat*, 200 *suwar*. He deposited the trust of his life [i.e., he died] in the eighth year of the second cycle [i.e., the eighteenth regnal year of Shah Jahan, 1054-55/1644-45].

### 35.2. SALIH

**[I, p. 489]** Among the events of this happy day [l Zi'l-Hijja 1041/19 June 1632], . . . Makramat Khan and 'Abd al-Haqq both became the recipients of fortunate shares and full portions [of royal bounty], through the bequest to the former of a mansab rank of 1,500 *zat* and 300 *suwar*; and to the latter, the increased mansab rank of 900 *zat* and [100] *suwar*, along with the title of Amanat Khan

**[II, p. 266]** On the 1st of Sha'ban 1047 [19 December 1637], Amanat Khan--whose novel style of calligraphy (*khatt-nu-a'in*) has drawn the line of cancellation (*raqm-i-naskh*) across the fresh down (*khatt-i-sabz*) [on the cheeks] of the calligraphers of the celestial realm of beauty--was exalted with the present of an elephant, in reward for the inscription which he had written inside the sky-high dome (*gumbad*) of the tomb (*mazar*), displaying marks of divine bounty, of Her late Majesty the Queen.

### 35.3. BHAKKARI, *ZAKHIRAT AL-KHAWANIN*

Mirza 'Abd al-Haqq, the brother of Afzal Khan, was a follower of the Sunna, while Afzal Khan followed the Imamiya [Shi'ite] creed.

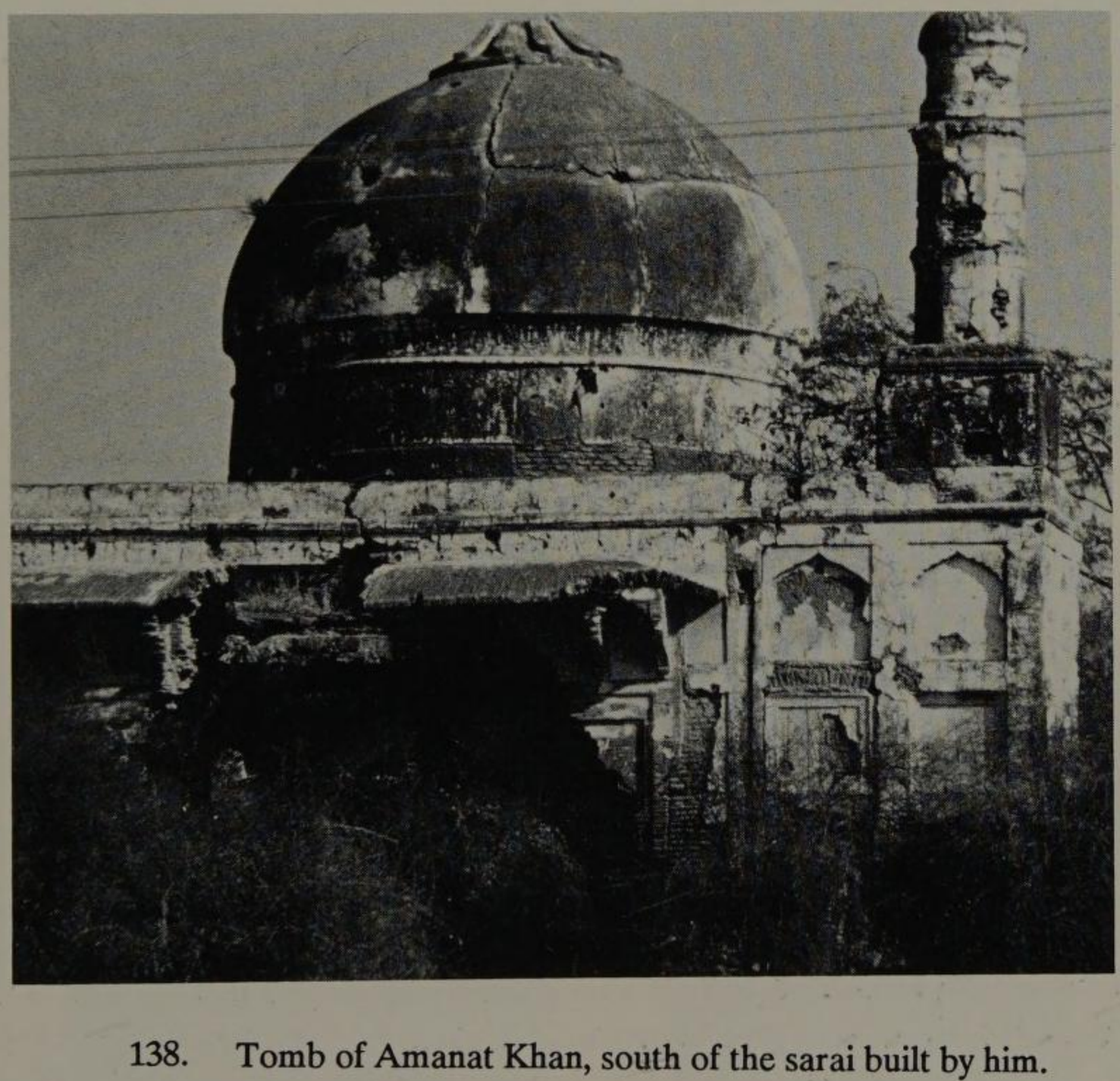
### 35.4. CHANDARBHAN BARAHMAN, *CHAHAR CHAMAN*

**[fol. 171]** After the occurrence of the inevitable event [i.e., the death] of that truth-knowing Khan [Afzal Khan], Amanat Khan, who was a real brother of that 'Allami [supremely learned] of the Age and the Time, resigned from his office and gave up his mansab; and taking to the corner of retirement, he became a complete recluse. And he constructed, at a distance of one stage from Lahore, a heart-pleasing sarai; and having founded [lit., brought into existence] a village, he presently rests there in eternal sleep [i.e., is buried there].

35.5. BAKHTAWAR KHAN, *MIRAT AL-'ALAM*

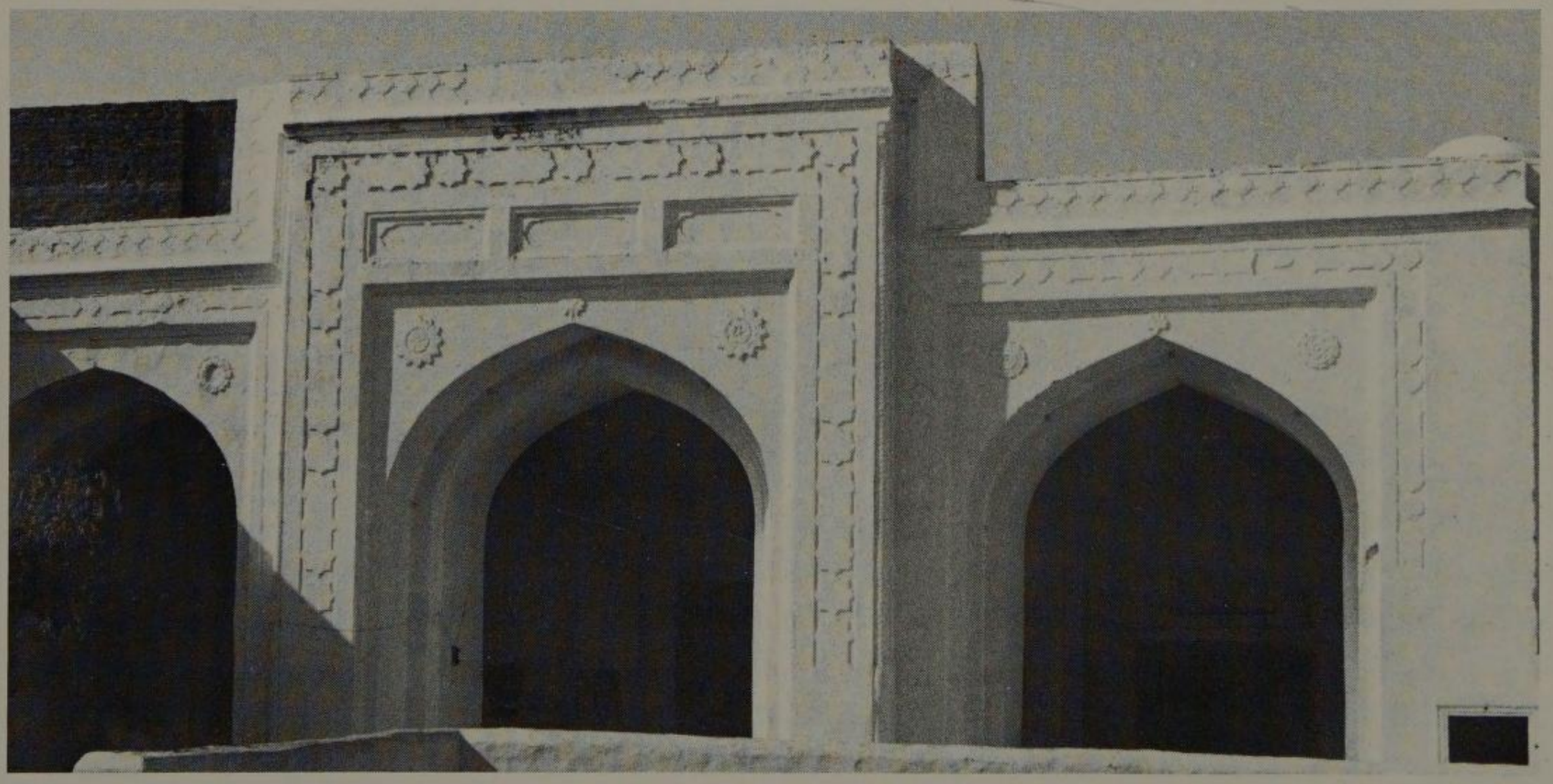
Amanat Khan, brother of 'Allami Afzal Khan: His naskh style of calligraphy (*khatt*) has drawn the line (*khatt*) of cancellation (*naskh*) on the writings of the naskh-writers of the time. The sight of his calligraphy used to add the brightness of insight to the eye and sight of those of creative discernment. The inscriptions of the sky-high dome (*gumbad*) of the tomb (*maqbara*) of Her late Majesty, of Maryam's status, Mumtaz al-Zaman, were written by his jewel-threaded pen. And as a reward for that, His Majesty Firdaus Ashyani [Shah Jahan] had distinguished that Prodigy of the Age, in the year 1047 Hijri [19 December 1637], by the gift of an elephant and favor of a robe of honor.

And that fortune-marked Khan constructed an inn (*rabat*) of lofty stature and a soul-refreshing garden near the Abode of Sovereignty, Lahore. And on the gate of the inn (*sarai*), he had written an inscription in naskh letters (*khatt*), by the sight of which, the eye of insight carries off abundant pleasure. And he departed from this transitory world to the eternal abode (*sarai*) in the year 1050 [*sic*; should be 1054 or 1055/1644-45], and was buried in the garden which he had laid out near his sarai.



138. Tomb of Amanat Khan, south of the sarai built by him.

139. Sikandra, gateway of Akbar's tomb, inscribed by calligrapher 'Abd al-Haqq Shirazi, later titled Amanat Khan; completed 1022/1613.



140. Agra, Madrasa Shahi mosque, inscribed by Amanat Khan; completed 1046/1636-37.

# 36

# ARCHITECTURAL CALLIGRAPHY BY AMANAT KHAN ON OTHER MONUMENTS

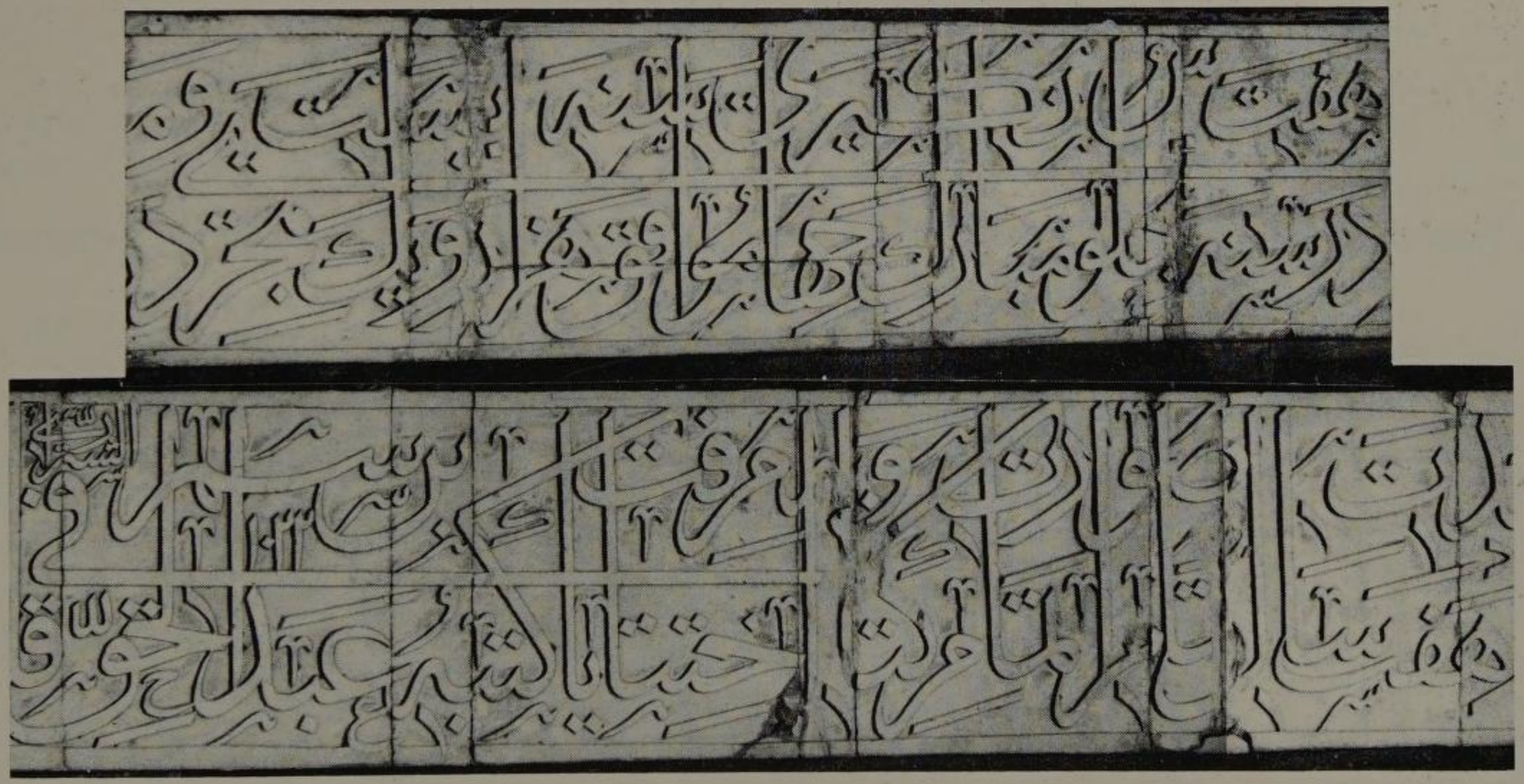
[The documented career of Amanat Khan as a designer of architectural calligraphy in Mughal India extends from 1612-13 to 1640-41, a period of almost thirty years. A detailed study of his various lengthy inscriptions is beyond the scope of this anthology; accordingly, the following illustrations and translations document only the signed and dated colophons--other than those on the Taj Mahal--which Amanat Khan usually placed prominently on the buildings. For some unknown reason, Amanat Khan signed his name two or three times on each monument he worked on: three times on the gateway of Akbar's tomb, the Madrasa Shahi mosque, and, as discussed above, twice on the Taj Mahal.

[Although its colophons are missing, the severely damaged glazed-tile Qur'anic calligraphy on the Chini-ka-Rauza at Agra must also have been designed by Amanat Khan; traditionally identified as the tomb of his brother Afzal Khan, who died in Lahore in early January 1639, the calligraphy is identical in both style and technique to that on Amanat Khan's caravanserai built in 1640-41, which may also have been intended as a memorial for his late brother.]

## 36.1. THREE SIGNATURES ON THE GATEWAY OF AKBAR'S TOMB, SIKANDRA

### *Signature of 'Abd al-Haqq on south facade (on left jamb of entrance arch, colophon of inscribed Persian dedication)*

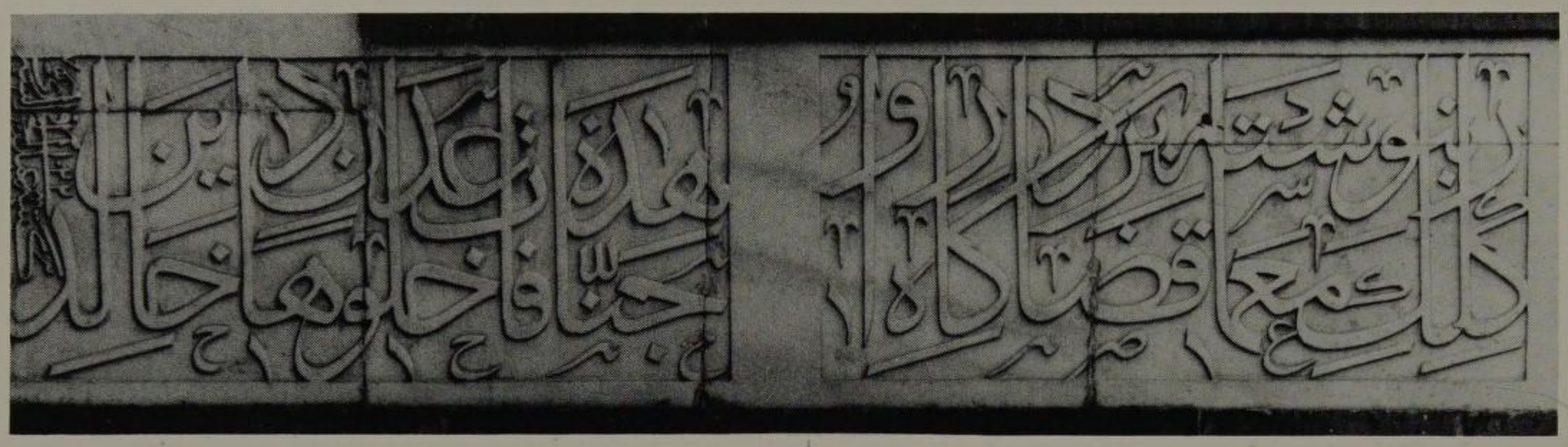
141.



"In the seventh year of the august accession, corresponding with one thousand and twenty-one Hijri, after seven years, the building was completed and the inscription finished. Written by 'Abd al-Haqq, son of Qasim al-Shirazi, in 1022."

*Signature of 'Abd al-Haqq on south facade (above dado panel at left of entrance arch, at end of Persian dedicatory verses)*

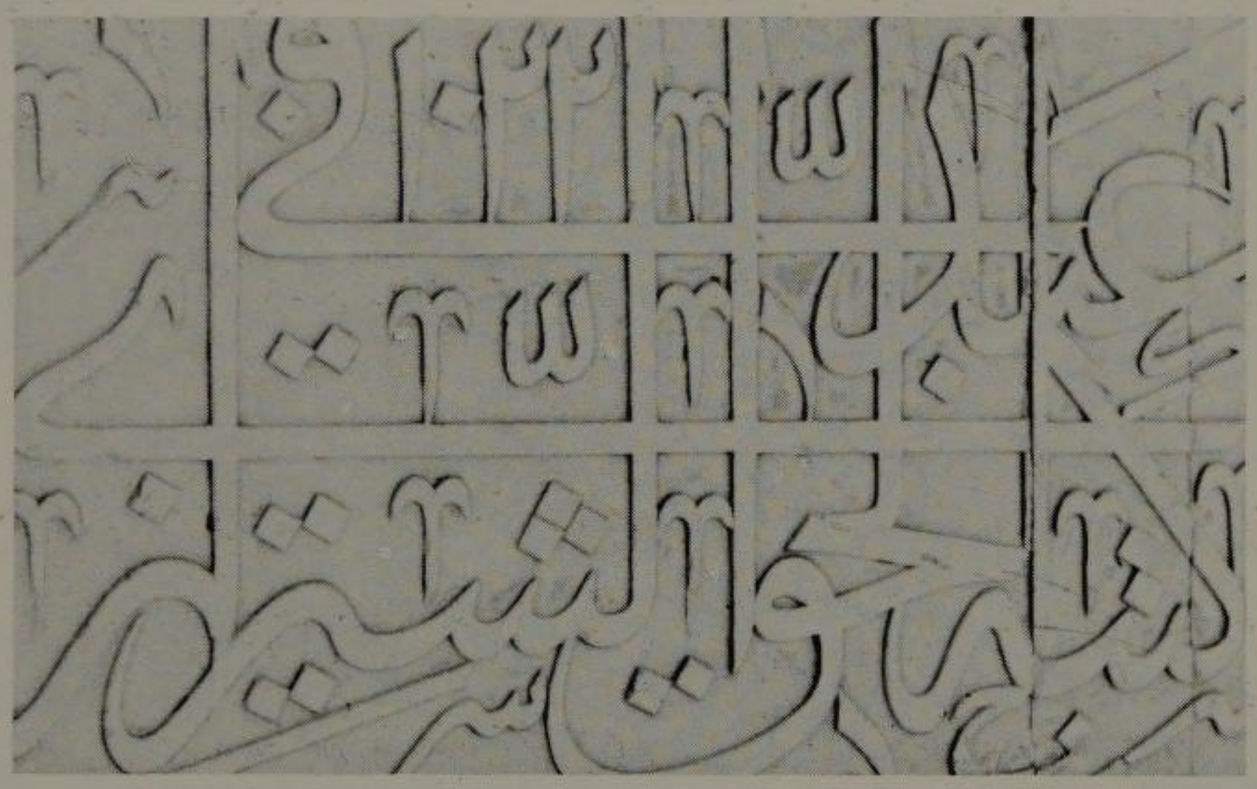
142.



The pen of the mason of the Divine Decree has written on its threshold:
"*These are the gardens of Eden, enter them to live forever.*"
Written by 'Abd al-Haqq of Shiraz, in 1022 [1613].

*Signature of 'Abd al-Haqq on north facade (on left jamb of entrance arch)*

143.



Written by 'Abd al-Haqq of Shiraz, in 1022.

## 36.2. THREE SIGNATURES ON THE MADRASA SHAHI MOSQUE, AGRA

*Two signatures of Amanat Khan on central mihrab (bottom left, at end of Qur'anic passages)*

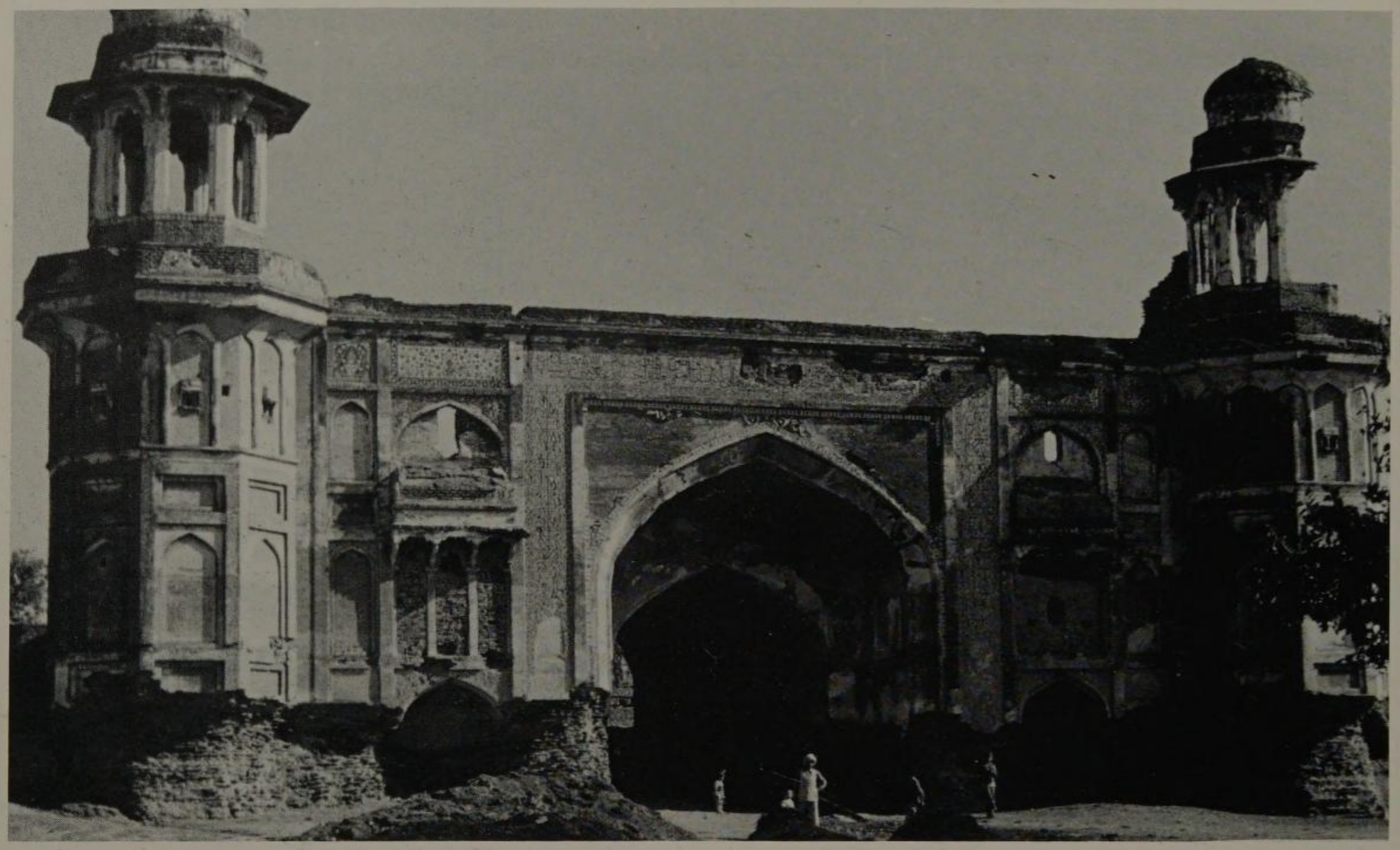
144.

Written by 'Abd al-Haqq, entitled Amanat Khan, the year 1045.

*Signature of Amanat Khan on south mihrab (bottom left, at end of Qur'anic passage)*

145.

Written by 'Abd al-Haqq, entitled Amanat Khan, the year 1046.

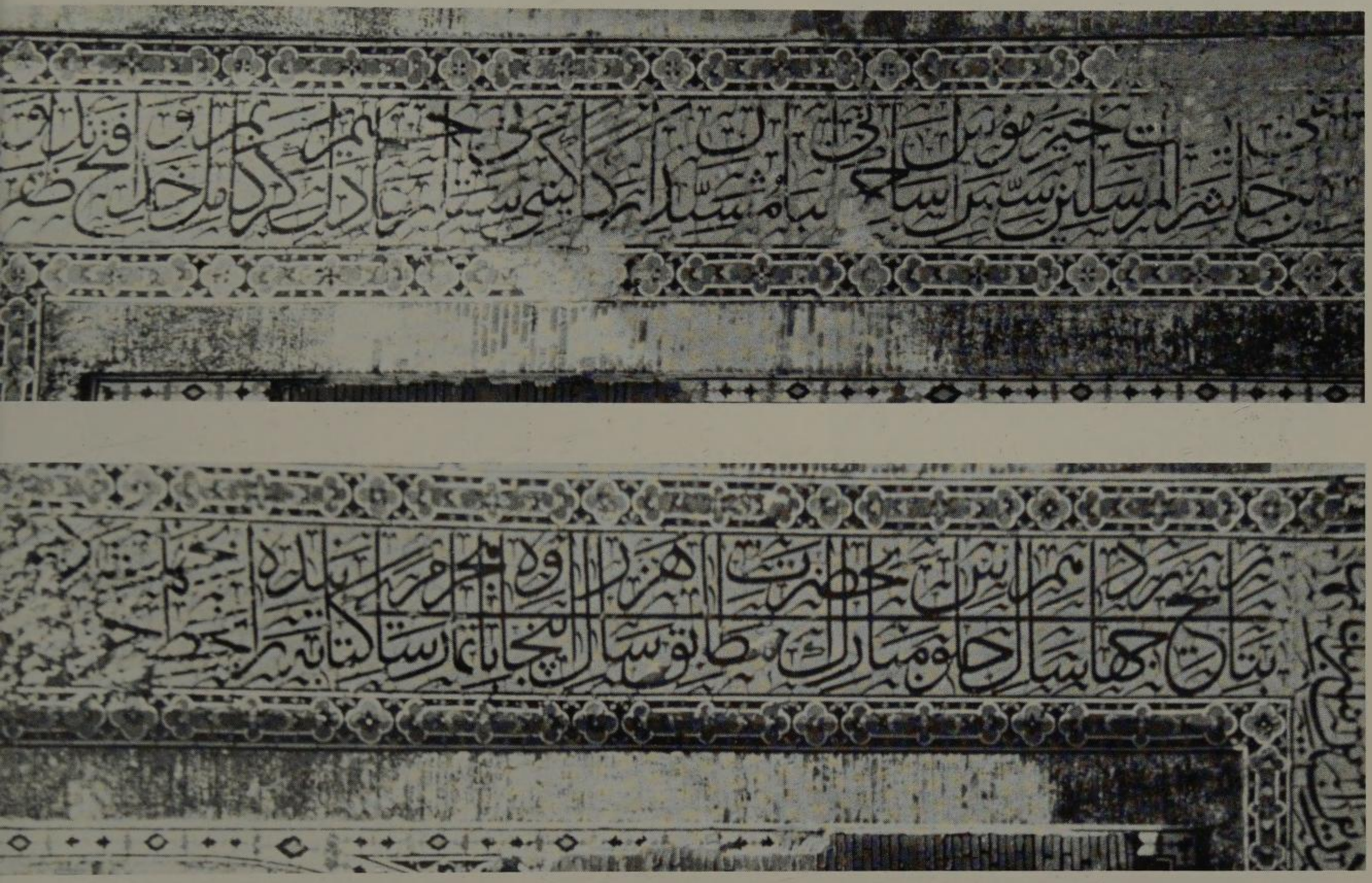


146. Sarai Amanat Khan, inscribed by Amanat Khan; completed 1050/1640-41.

147. Sarai Amanat Khan, west facade, dedication inscription of Amanat Khan; dated 1050/1640-41.

## 36.3. INSCRIPTIONS ON SARAI AMANAT KHAN, NEAR AMRITSAR

*Dedication on west facade, composed by Amanat Khan*



148.

[?] . . . the Shadow of the Exalted Nourisher of the Worlds, the Defender of the code of the best of the Prophets, the Foundation-layer of the basis of sovereignty, Strengthener of the pillars of world conquest, the Merciful and Just, the Generous and Perfect, the Lord of victory and conquest, that religion-cherishing Monarch, that Unique one in imparting dignity to the throne [?], the Shadow of God, His Majesty SHIHAB AL-DIN ABU'L-MUZAFFAR MUHAMMAD, SAHIB-I-QIRAN-SANI, SHAH JAHAN PADSHAH GHAZI--may God perpetuate his kingdom and sovereignty and make available to the worlds his goodness and generosity!

And I have founded this sarai in this land for the comfort of God's creatures; and having completed it on this date, the fourteenth year of the accession of His August Majesty, corresponding to the year one thousand and fifty, I wrote this inscription with my own hand as a memorial . . . [signature missing].

*Dedication verses on east facade, composed by Amanat Khan*

(1) . . . . [couplet missing].

(2) It is a place of safety, an abode of joy and a pleasant spot,
. . . . [line missing].

(3) This sarai was constructed during the reign of that King,
For whom victory, help and conquest are God-given.

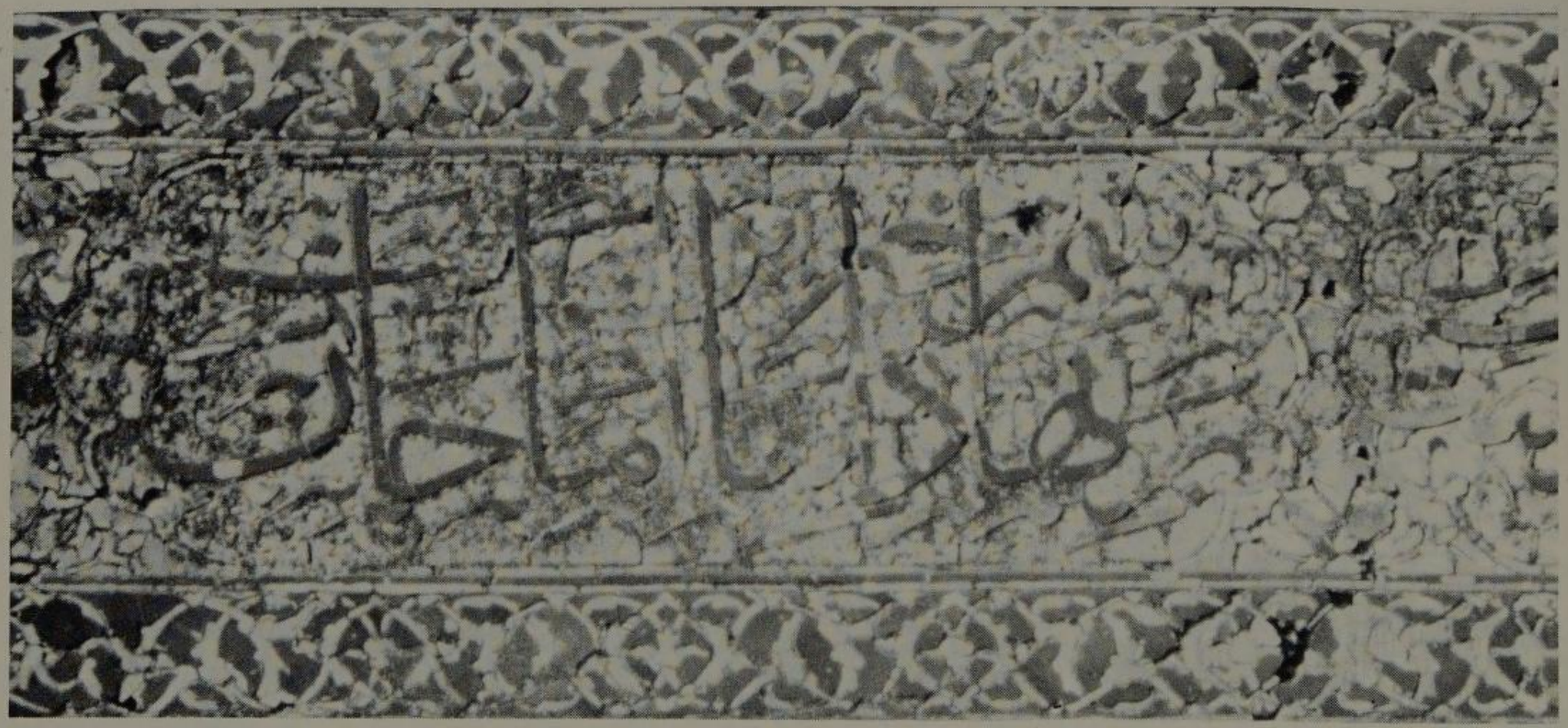
(4) That world of generosity and magnanimity, the Emperor Shah Jahan,
That victorious King of Kings, endowed with good fortune, wisdom and justice.

(5) For the public benefit was this sarai founded by Amanat Khan,
The facade of whose court remains ever open.

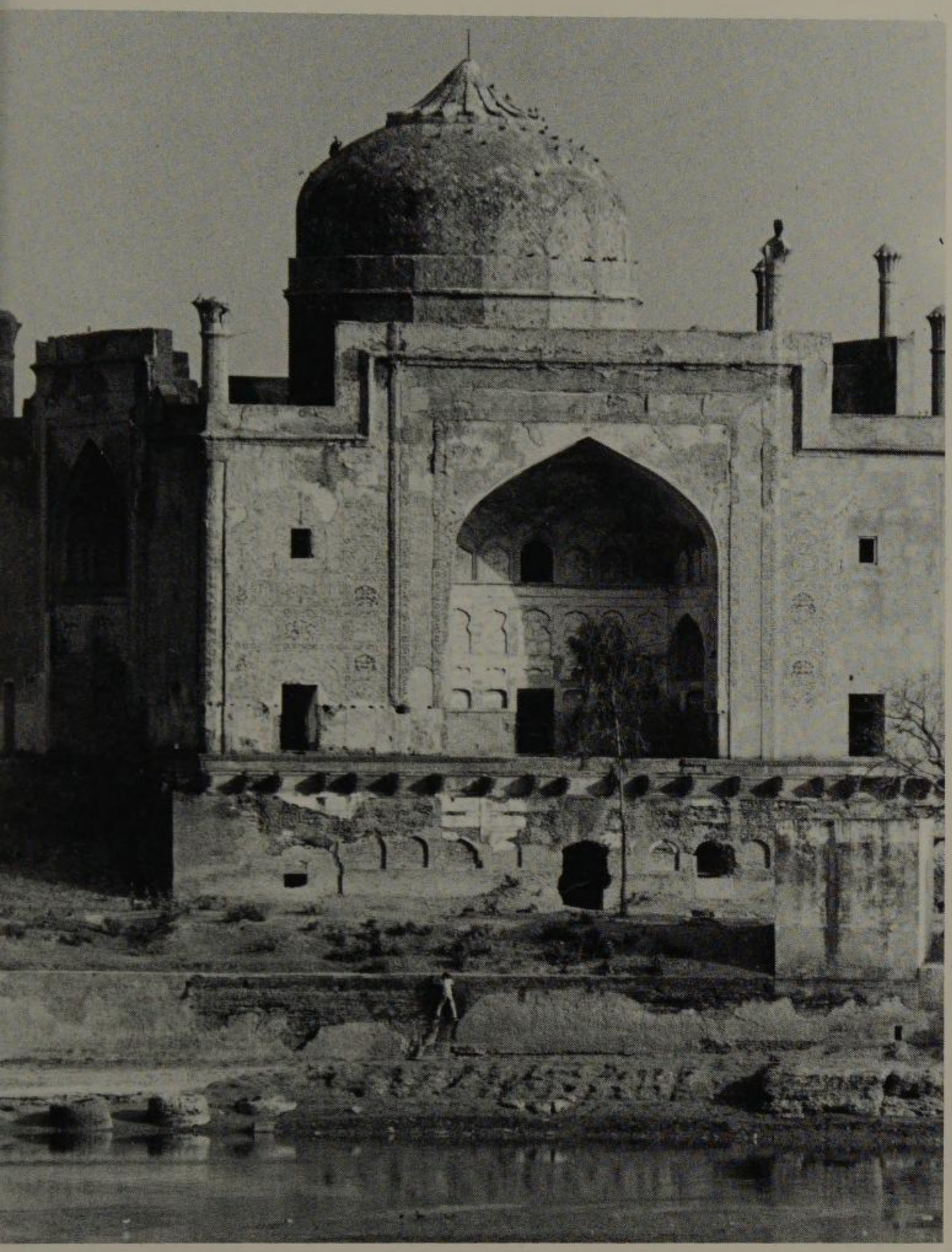
(6) And he wrote with his own hand the inscription on its portal,
The shadow of which spreads over the spheres.

(7) In the fourteenth year of the accession of that King of the World,
Whose justice and equity from . . . [illegible].

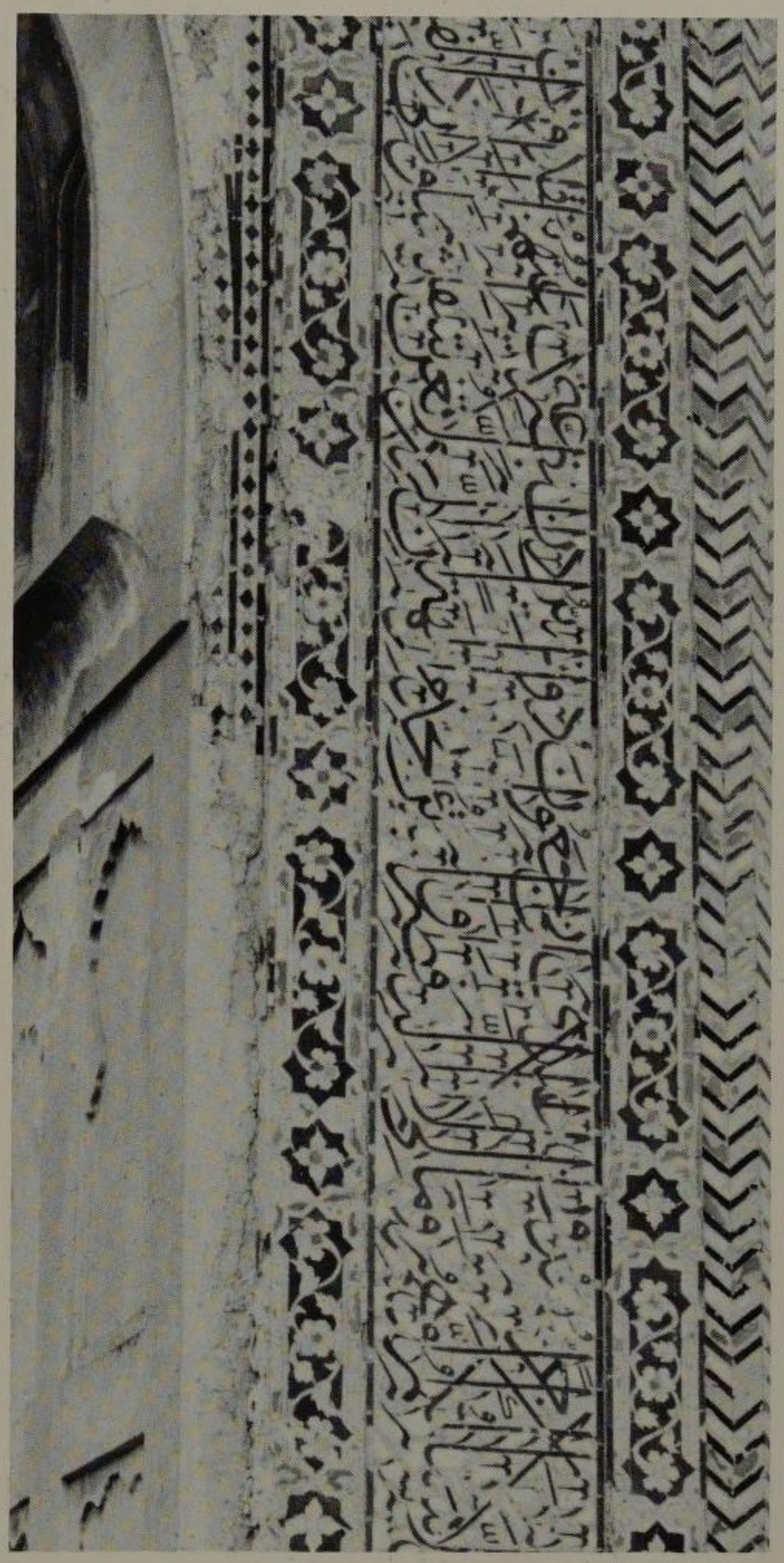
(8) . . . . [couplet missing].



149. Detail of part of Amanat Khan's dedication verse on east facade.



150. Agra, Chini-ka-Rauza, presumed tomb of Afzal Khan, brother of Amanat Khan, ca. 1639-40.



151. Qur'anic inscriptions on Chini-ka-Rauza, probably designed by Amanat Khan.

# PART V

# THE ARCHITECT OF THE TAJ MAHAL AND THE SUPERVISORS OF CONSTRUCTION

152. Mughal architect holding grid plan, detail of *Babur Nama* painting, ca. 1590. London, Victoria and Albert Museum.

# 37

# THE ARCHITECT OF THE TAJ MAHAL, USTAD AHMAD LAHORI

## REFERENCES IN MUGHAL HISTORIES AND DOCUMENTS

[The evidence supporting the identification of Ustad Ahmad as the architect of the Taj Mahal is primarily circumstantial; the single explicit evidence is the verse in the *Diwan-i-Muhandis* of his second son Lutf Allah, which claims his father designed both the tomb of Mumtaz Mahal and the Shahjahanabad Fort. Since this second claim is corroborated in the official history of Shah Jahan's reign and other sources, the first claim must also be taken seriously. Other sources assembled here clearly prove that Ustad Ahmad enjoyed an outstanding reputation, not only as an architect, but also as an engineer, mathematician, and astronomer. Although no books by him survive, two of his sons, and various other descendants as well, were both practicing architects and prolific authors of a wide range of mathematical treatises.

[The evidence provided in certain works by the sons of Ustad Ahmad is also decisive. Many of these refer to his title, "Wonder of the Age" (*nadir al-'asr*), which Lutf Allah states was bestowed by Shah Jahan himself. From the evidence of a treatise by 'Ata Allah, it appears that his father had already received this title by the date of composition, 1044/1634-35--which is only three years after construction first began on the tomb.

[Based on the evidence of seventeenth-century sources, the only other possible candidate would be Mir 'Abd al-Karim, who had been Jahangir's chief architect, but the sources mention him and Makramat Khan only as supervisors, not as architects. Of the architect Ustad Hamid, who worked on the Delhi fort with Ustad Ahmad, we know only that he was still alive in December 1659--ten years after the death of Ustad Ahmad--when he accompanied Ustad Ahmad's son Lutf Allah to Mandu.]

### 37.1 WARIS

**[fol. 386a]** ACCOUNT OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF SHAHJAHANABAD FORT OF FIRM FOUNDATION AND ITS SKY-TOUCHING BUILDINGS AT THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CAPITAL OF DELHI ON THE BANK OF THE RIVER JUMNA

*Decision of Shah Jahan to Found a New Seat of Government*

Since it is the honorable wish of His most gracious Majesty--the Lord of glory and greatness, whose auspicious being has been made the source of tranquillity and edification in the world by the Dispenser of eternal justice and the Creator of the universe--to establish his august fame on the pages of time, he has determined to adorn the world with enduring monuments, in conformity to the high ambitions and exalted magnaminity of renowned kings. Because the saying, "*Verily our relics tell of us; so look at our relics after we have gone,*" is writ large over the gateways to Paradise, the righteous idea and world-decorating desire became manifest in the recess of His Majesty's far-seeing imagination that a new seat of government should be founded on the bank of the river Jumna, between the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad and the Abode of Sovereignty Lahore. It was therefore decreed that a captivating place with temperate climate should be selected for a new fort, supplied with an abundance of flowing water and pleasant palaces overlooking the said river.

*Selection of the Site and Commencement of Construction*

After a long search and detailed discussion, the planning engineers and expert architects finally selected a tract of land which was situated at the outskirts of the capital of Delhi, between the fortress of Nurgarh and the beginning of the populous city. Whereupon, the expert engineers and chief architects, Ustad Ahmad and Ustad Hamid, worked out a plan according to the scheme approved by the Emperor, under the supervision of Ghairat Khan, the nephew of 'Abd Allah Khan *Bahadur Firoz Jang* and governor of Delhi, who had been entrusted with the construction of this building.

Subsequently, at His Majesty's command, ground was broken at the expiration of 10 *gharis* of the night of Friday, the 25th of Zi'l-Hijja 1048 Hijri [29 April 1639], corresponding to the 9th of the solar month of Urdibihisht and the twelfth year of the auspicious reign, at the precise hour selected by those well versed in the science of the stars and the heavens. From this date, the skillful workers had started to excavate the earth with their spades with all promptness.

And some two weeks later, at the royal command as inevitable as destiny, the foundations of that lofty, firm-pillared mansion were laid at the expiration of two and one-half *gharis* of the night of Friday, the 9th of Muharram 1049 Hijri [12 May 1639], corresponding to the 23rd of Urdibihihst of the aforesaid year. Whereupon, large numbers of stonecutters, goldsmiths, mosaic workers, inlayers, masons, and carpenters came from all over the empire and started construction on this vast project.

37.2. MULLA TUGHRA, *RISALA*

[The following excerpt from a letter of the poet Mulla Tughra, who was attached to Shah Jahan's court during the entire reign, is adapted from the translation in M. A. Chaghatai, *Le Tadj Mahal d'Agra*, since the Persian text could not be located by the present authors. His undated letter appears to have been written on one of the occasions when the royal entourage was about to depart from Kashmir towards Lahore--therefore either in 1044/1634, 1050/1540, or 1055/1645. After Shah Jahan's forced abdication, Mulla Tughra spent his final years in seclusion in Kashmir, where he died sometime before 1078/1677.]

. . . And the highly dignified Mulla Ahmad Mi'mar--that discerning appreciator of new ideas of the "picture-gallery," that master of resonant language of the "workshop," that designer of Wisdom's mansions, that writer of inscriptions on the pavilion of the royal intellect, and that architect of the Holy Temple of benedictions--has rebuilt the exhausted spirit of this writer with the tranquil mortar of his friendship. And by the wisdom of his remembrance, he has removed the dust from the idol temple [of my mind]. And as long as this idol temple of mine continues to exist, may the pavement of its solidity be ever enriched by the existence of that architect of the storehouse of sacred qualities!

37.3. HARKARN DAS, *INSHA*

[Although he was the author of a well-known treatise on models for the writing of various official letters, few details of Harkarn's life are known. Judging from the latest date mention in his *Insha*, he apparently lived until 1055/1645-46. He therefore was probably a contemporary of Ustad Ahmad, whose name he cites in this brief order addressed to the superintendent of the ford at the town of Gujrat,--

which is situated along the Chenab river north of Lahore, on the Mughal highway to Kabul. As with the preceding excerpt, the translation is adapted from that given by M. A. Chaghatai.]

And should Ustad Ahmad occasionally need to cross the river in the course of his official duties, he is not to be obstructed or detained in any way.

## 37.4. MENTION OF USTAD AHMAD IN AN UNDATED LETTER TO JA'FAR KHAN

[This letter, of unknown author and date, comes from a fragmentary manuscript in the collection of the late M. A. Chaghatai. Since the text is unintelligible in places, the translation is a quite tentative reconstruction that frequently departs from a literal rendering.

[The addressee of the letter, Ja'far Khan, was a high ranking noble under Shah Jahan; the son of Sadiq Khan *Mir Bakhshi*, he was married to a sister of Mumtaz Mahal. The letter deals with certain construction work on the Shamshergarh fort and other structures at Hasan Abdal, which was currently being carried on by Muhammad Mumin and Ustad Ahmad, the superintendent and architect respectively. Praising both men for their skill and diligence, the writer of the letter seems to be asking that Ja'far Khan insure that they be retained on the project; for if they were to be replaced, he feels that "the thread of the order and arrangement which they have established here will very likely snap."

[Unfortunately, we do not know when this work was in progress. Ja'far Khan became governor of the Panjab in April 1646, during Shah Jahan's nineteeth regnal year, but the date of the letter could be much earlier--or, on the evidence of the dated Margalla hill inscription, perhaps much later.]

[**p. 363**] To the Exalted Minister (*Madar al-Maham*), his Lordship Ja'far Khan:

In view of his generous Lordship's grasp of affairs, it is humbly submitted that it is hardly necessary to bring to the august attention the facts of the understanding, skill, prudence, resourcefulness and integrity of Muhammad Mumin, the superintendent (*darogha*) of the heaven-like mansions (*manazil*), gardens, and sarais situated at Hasan Abdal. After the august and exalted order concerning the construction of the Shamshergarh fort received the honor of issuance, although the superintendent and the architect (*mi'mar*), who had reached there before the arrival of Kazim Beg from the resplendent presence, strived to their utmost capacity and power to procure the building materials for the edifice, they were not able to achieve satisfaction; and as a result, the work came to be delayed.

And from the memoranda [?] which always accompany the heavenly orders when they receive the honor of issuance, details of the diligence of the architect (*mi'mar*) from Kabul working in conjunction with the superintendent [?] must have come to his Lordship's notice, and of the progress made in constructing the fort, when that order as irrevocable as the Divine decree had granted the happiness of its receipt and bequest upon that Pillar of the State (*'Umdat al-Mulk*) Mahabat Khan [**p. 364**]; and also the details of how all the building materials for the fort were acquired and arranged for from Hasan Abdal and its dependencies through that asylum of loftiness Haji Allah Quli, the supervisor of construction of the said fort, who it may be said has no partner nor equal in skill, understanding of the problem, hard labor, good service, resourcefulness, effort and endeavor, and observance of the rules of practical execution of work.

The circumstances of the said Haji Allah's engagement had been communicated earlier to that court where even kings prostrate themselves; and the facts of the good conduct and skill of the said Muhammad Mumin and Ustad Ahmad Mi'mar--who

possesses complete skill and perfect mastery in planning (*tarrahi*) and knowledge of the work--also reached that Pillar of the State (*'Umdat al-Mulk*) [Mahabat Khan]. With the realization that they were fully qualified to execute the construction of the fort in exact compliance with the holy orders, they were both summoned from Hasan Abdal; with some difficulty, they were pursuaded on some count to accept the assignment of the supervision and construction (*mi'mari*) of this place. And despite their prior commitments for the sake of procurement of material and progress of the work, they submitted a complete proposal (*tajwiz*). In fact, in the process, it was learned that they possess abundant store of skill, for they have proved themselves though the touchstone of experience.

And with the assistance, help and support of the said asylum of loftiness [i.e., Haji Allah Quli], in a short time, they have completed the fortification of unfired bricks round the city and raised the construction up to the battlements (*kangura*). As a matter of fact, at most places merlons have been and are being constructed, and a fort of dressed stone, approximately 30,000 yards and a fraction [in area], has been built and the work of construction is continuing from day to day. As all the workers and artisans are willing, complete economy has been shown by them in carrying out the works.

In the same manner, they have also discharged the other duties which had been entrusted to them relating to Hasan Abdal--such as the laying out of the garden, exalted mansion, and water-dam of the Kashmiri gate, the preparation of the rose-house (*gulab-khana*) and construction of the sarai--in a most excellent and praiseworthy manner. And they are still striving and fully engaged, and have carried out and are carrying out their tasks in a judicious manner, and are hopeful of some reward [?] from the bountifulness of his Lordship, the place of hope's fulfillment.

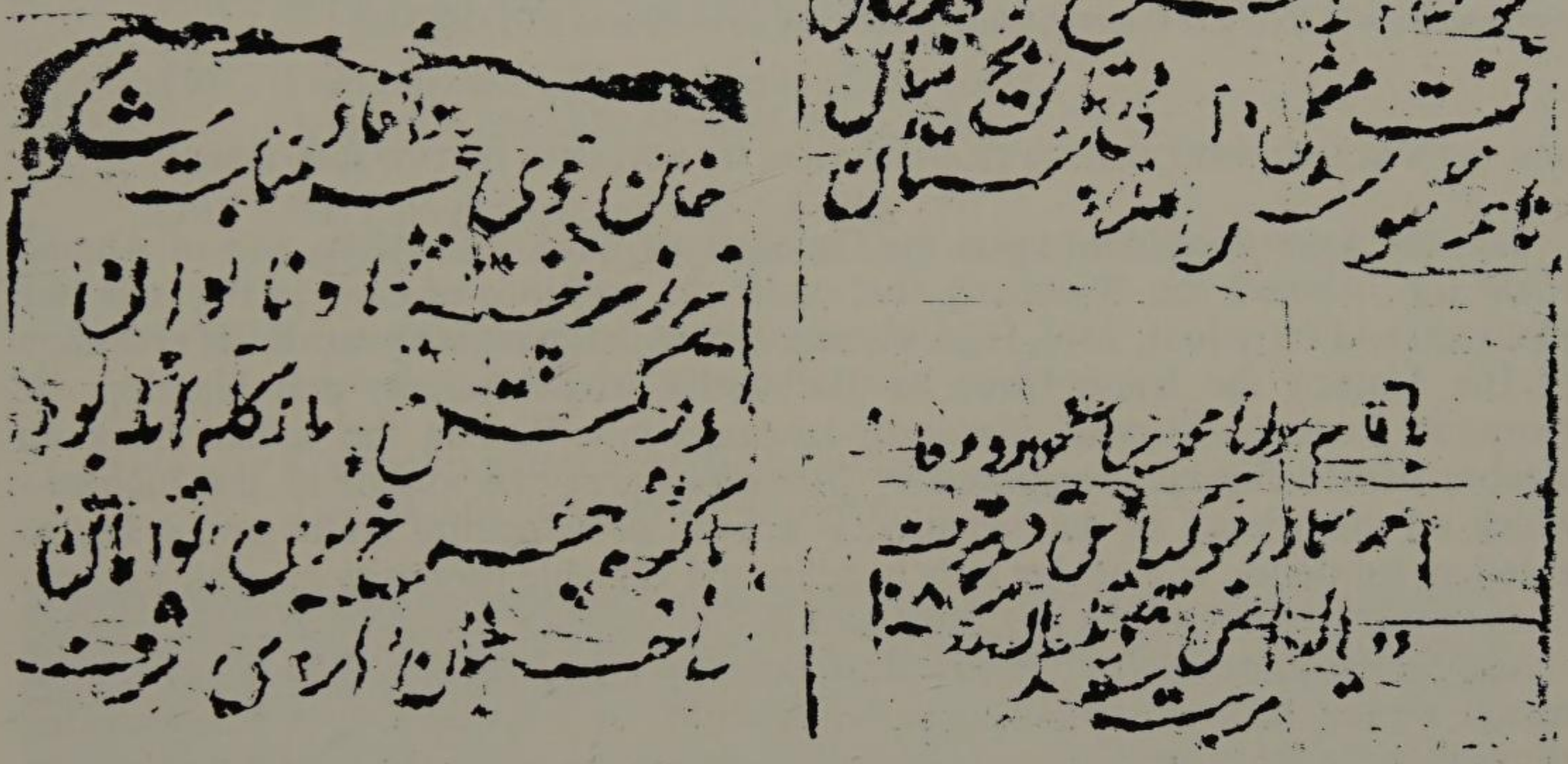
At this juncture, however, the officers in the august service obviously are proposing to entrust the works of Hasan Abdal to someone else; and it has been stated that they are from the dependencies of Hasan Abdal, and would have recourse to the Darogha of that place; but since the latter for his own gain [?] would not allow the materials to reach here in accordance with the actual need, it is certain that the work here would be delayed.

Therefore, since in the event of the charge of that place being removed from Muhammad Momin and Ustad Ahmad, the thread of the order and arrangement which they have established here **[p. 365]** will very likely snap, this humble servant considered it necessary to place the facts before his Lordship's precious notice. He now awaits orders that the said requisites for the continued progress of the work here may be forthcoming, and the work assigned the same as before to Muhammad Mumin and Ustad Ahmad, so that with peace of mind they may engage themselves in executing it. For this servant considers that devoted service to the august and holy court of bountiful threshold and the construction of Shamshirgarh fort are one and the same. As to the rest, the matter is in your hands and the power yours.

May the days of his Lordship's life, fortune and luck be ever eternal and lasting.

## 37.5. INSCRIPTION IN THE MARGALLA PASS

[Although the inscription, which is dated 1083/1672 and records the construction of the Margalla pass near Hasan Abdal, gives the name of the architect (*mi'mar*) as Ahmad, it is problematic that it refers to Ustad Ahmad, since it is documented that he died in 1059/1649. The date seems to be correct, since it is given both in numerals and in a chronogram; if it refers to Ustad Ahmad, it must have been added many years after the fact, which would be unusual. Strangely, no ruler's name is given, and the identity of the Khan who patronized the construction is also uncertain. Because the Margalla pass lies in close proximity to Hasan Abdal, it is of course tempting to speculate that the Ahmad Mi'mar listed here and the Ustad Ahmad Mi'mar who constructed the Shamshergarh fort may be one and the same. Since the inscription is very damaged, it is also possible that it once contained the name of one of Ustad Ahmad's sons, followed immediately by the name of the father--a practice that is frequently encountered in inscriptions.]



He is the Almighty

The awe-inspiring and redoubtable Khan,
In whose grip even the lion is powerless,

On the hill of Margalla, the height of which
Unites it with the very heavens,

Caused to be built a pass so lofty
That . . . heaven on earth.

And for its date Mughal composed the chronogram:
"*The forehead of that moon-faced Lady, Hindustan*" [1083/1672].

Completed in 1083 [1672], under the superintendence of Mirza Muhammad [Mumin?], . . . Ahmad the architect (*mi'mar*), Jogidas the inspector, and Diyaldas the accountant.

## REFERENCES TO USTAD AHMAD IN LITERARY WORKS AND INSCRIPTIONS OF HIS SONS AND DESCENDANTS

### *References to Ustad Ahmad in the Works of 'Ata Allah Rashidi*

[The evidence of 'Ata Allah's Preface to his translation of the *Bijganit* suggests that Ustad Ahmad had received his title Nadir al-'Asr ("Wonder of the Age") sometime before 1044/l634-35--a title which Ustad Ahmad's second son, Lutf Allah, states in his *Diwan-i-Muhandis* was awarded by Shah Jahan. By 1044, construction on the mausoleum proper of the Taj was largely complete, making it a possibility that the title was awarded in connection with Ustad Ahmad's presumed role as chief architect.

['Ata Allah's Preface to his undated work *Khulasat al-Hisab* again alludes to his father's title, and also states unequivocably that "he became the chief architect (*mi'mar-i-kull*) of this court." 'Ata Allah's own skills as an architect are reflected in his design for the Bibi-ka-Maqbara at Aurangabad, the tomb of Aurangzeb's wife Rabi'a al-Daurani, which is dated by inscription to 1071/1660-61]

#### 37.6. 'ATA ALLAH, PREFACE TO TRANSLATION OF *BIJGANIT*, DATED 1044/1634-35

Says the slave dependent upon the Omnipotent Lord, 'Ata Allah, son of Ahmad *Nadir* [i.e., Ahmad, the "Wonder"], that under the guidance of God, in the year one thousand and forty-four, 1044, Hijri, corresponding to the eighth year of the accession of His Majesty the Sahib Qiran on the throne of sovereignty and kingship, he rendered from the Hindavi [Sanskrit] language into Persian the Indian book on algebra named *Bijganit*, composed by Bhaskaracharya--the author of the *Lilavati*--which on the science of mathematics, is a book of wonderful truths and a key to excellent subtleties, comprising lofty benefits and valuable propositions, which do not find mention in any Persian or Arabic work.

And he has adorned the preface of the book with a dedication of prayers for the regime of His Majesty the Khaqani, the inheritor of the kingdom of Solomon, the climber of the steps of honor and glory, the full-moon of the skies of magnificence and fortune, the knight in the field of firm Faith, the Sun of Religion and the world, the Refuge of Islam and Helper of Muslims. the victorious King and manifest proof, ABU'L-MUZAFFAR SHIHAB AL-DIN MUHAMMAD, SAHIB-I-QIRAN-I-SANI, SHAH JAHAN, PADSHAH GHAZI--may the Exalted God perpetuate the standards of his victorious caliphate and cause to last forever the light of his manifest benevolence!

#### 37.7. 'ATA ALLAH, VERSE PREFACE TO MATHEMATICAL TREATISE *KHULASAT AL-RAZ*

(1) **[fol. 49b]** This "Epitome of Secrets" (*khulasa*) has been cast in verse,
By this servant holding fast to the rope of supplication.

(2) The house-born one of the royal court,
The insignificant being 'Ata Allah.

(3) Son of Ustad Ahmad Mi'mar,
That compass pointing to the center of Knowledge.

(4) **[fol. 60a]** That "Wonder of the Age" (*nadir al-'asr*) was in every art,
Proof of the power of the Most Beneficient God.

(5) He who followed the profession of Science,
Used his chisel to remove rust from the face of Imagination.

(6) For the reason that he embodied every art and skill,
He became Chief Architect (*Mi'mar-i-Kull*) in this court.

(7) Alas, how may a mere amateur like myself,
Achieve fame within this garden?

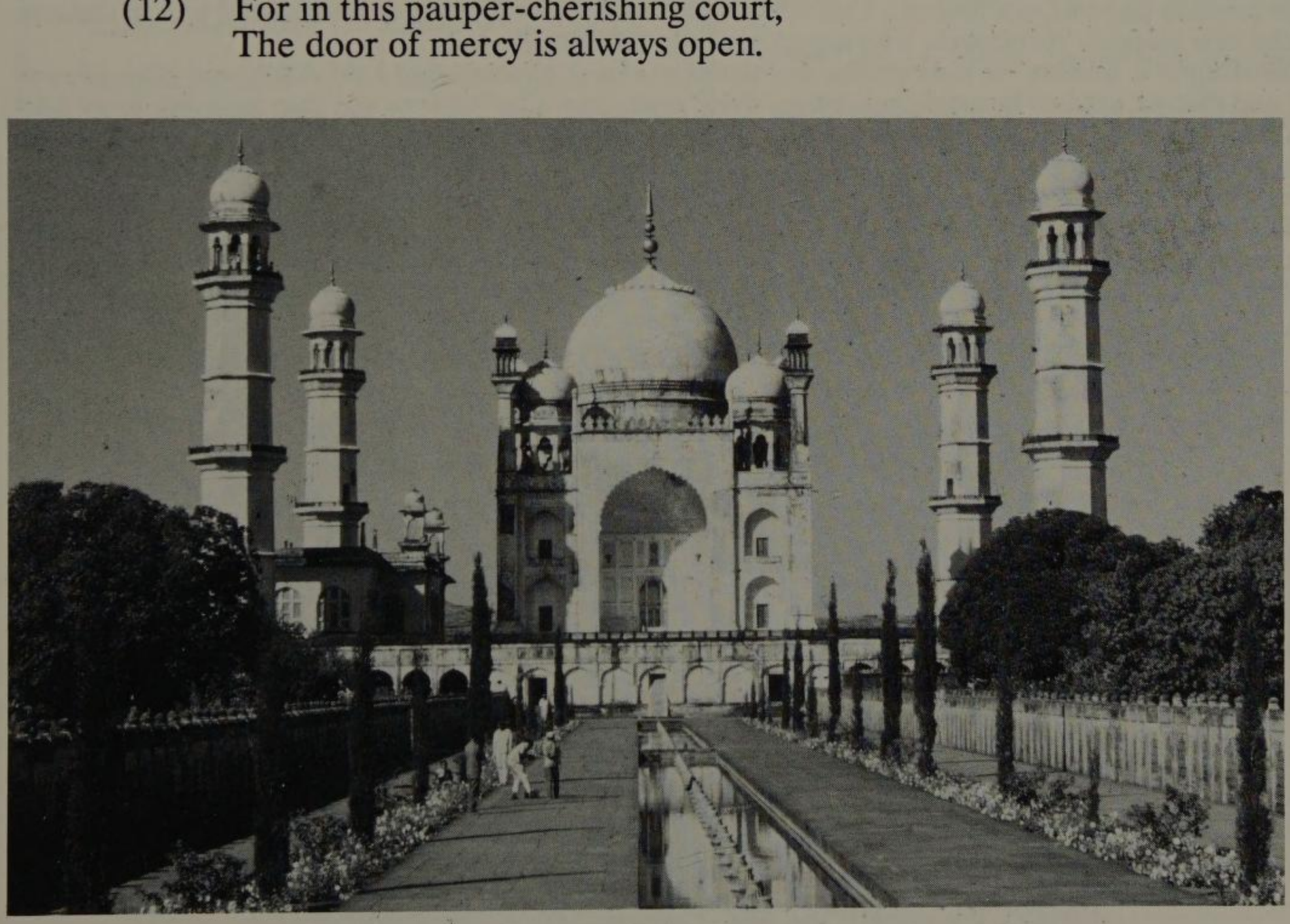
(8) But verily this gem-pouring threshold
Is the architect of bejeweled fortune.

(9) I am only one of the servants of this court,
A humble house-born slave of the King.

(10) But though slow and without skill,
I am the reciter of the praise of that King of ocean and land.

(11) I cannot distinguish black from white,
Therefore my hope rests entirely on the King.

(12) For in this pauper-cherishing court,
The door of mercy is always open.



154. Aurangabad, tomb of Rab'i al-Daurani, wife of Aurangzeb, designed by 'Ata Allah, son of Ustad Ahmad; completed 1071/1661-62.

37.8. INSCRIPTION ON GATEWAY OF BIBI-KA-MAQBARA, AURANGABAD

This grave was made under the management of the worthy superintendent (*darogha*) Abu'l-Qasim Beg
This splendid tomb was completed by 'Ata Allah the architect (*mi'mar*), under the governorship of Haybat Ra'i in 1071 [1660-61].

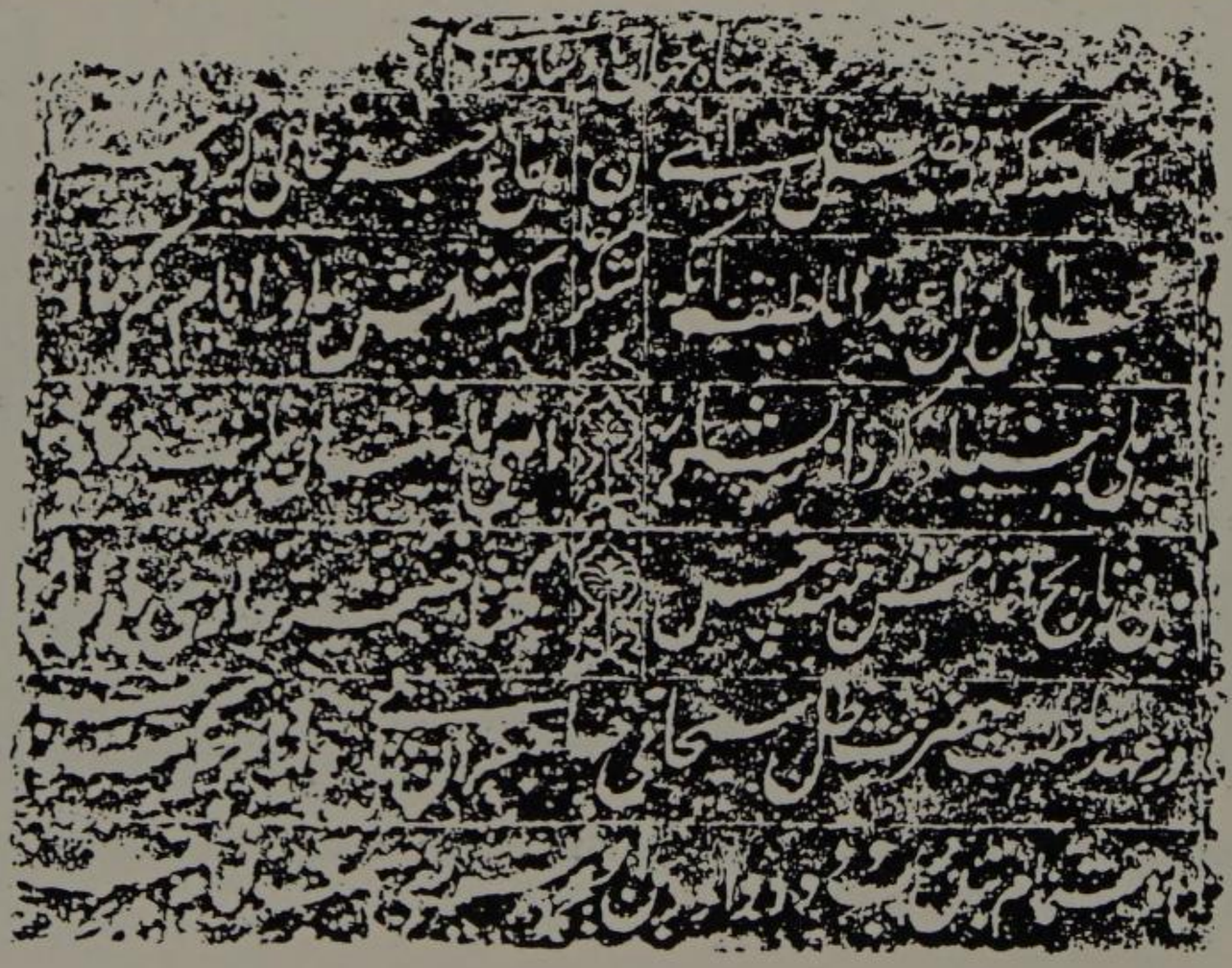
*References to Ustad Ahmad in the Works of Lutf Allah Muhandis*

[Although brief mentions of Ustad Ahmad abound in the scientific works of his two elder sons, it is only the *Diwan* of Lutf Allah, discovered in the 1930s, that makes the claim that his father built the tomb of Mumtaz Mahal as well as the Shahjahanabad fort. Two chronograms give the date of Ustad Ahmad's death as 1059/1649.

[The *Diwan* also mentions some of Lutf Allah's own projects, completed in 1060/1650 and 1066/1656, for his princely patron Dara Shikoh. Lutf Allah's connection with Dara may have placed him in disfavor with the new emperor Aurangzeb, who seized power in 1068/1658.

[Based upon a number of inscriptions and dated works, it appears that Lutf Allah was born around 1610, and that he lived to be seventy or more, dying sometime after 1680 or so. Two inscriptions of Lutf Allah are included here, which attest to his long career as an engineer. The first, recording the construction of a bridge at Peshawar, is dated 1039/1629, during the second or third regnal year of Shah Jahan, when Lutf Allah was probably only in his late twenties. The second inscription, at Mandu, is dated 1070/1559, after the capture and execution of his former princely patron Dara Shikoh, when Lutf Allah must have been in his late fifties. The Mandu inscription also states that his father had been the architect of Shah Jahan (*mi'mar-i-Shah Jahani*).]

37.9. PESHAWAR BRIDGE INSCRIPTION COMPOSED BY MUHANDIS, DATED 1039/1629



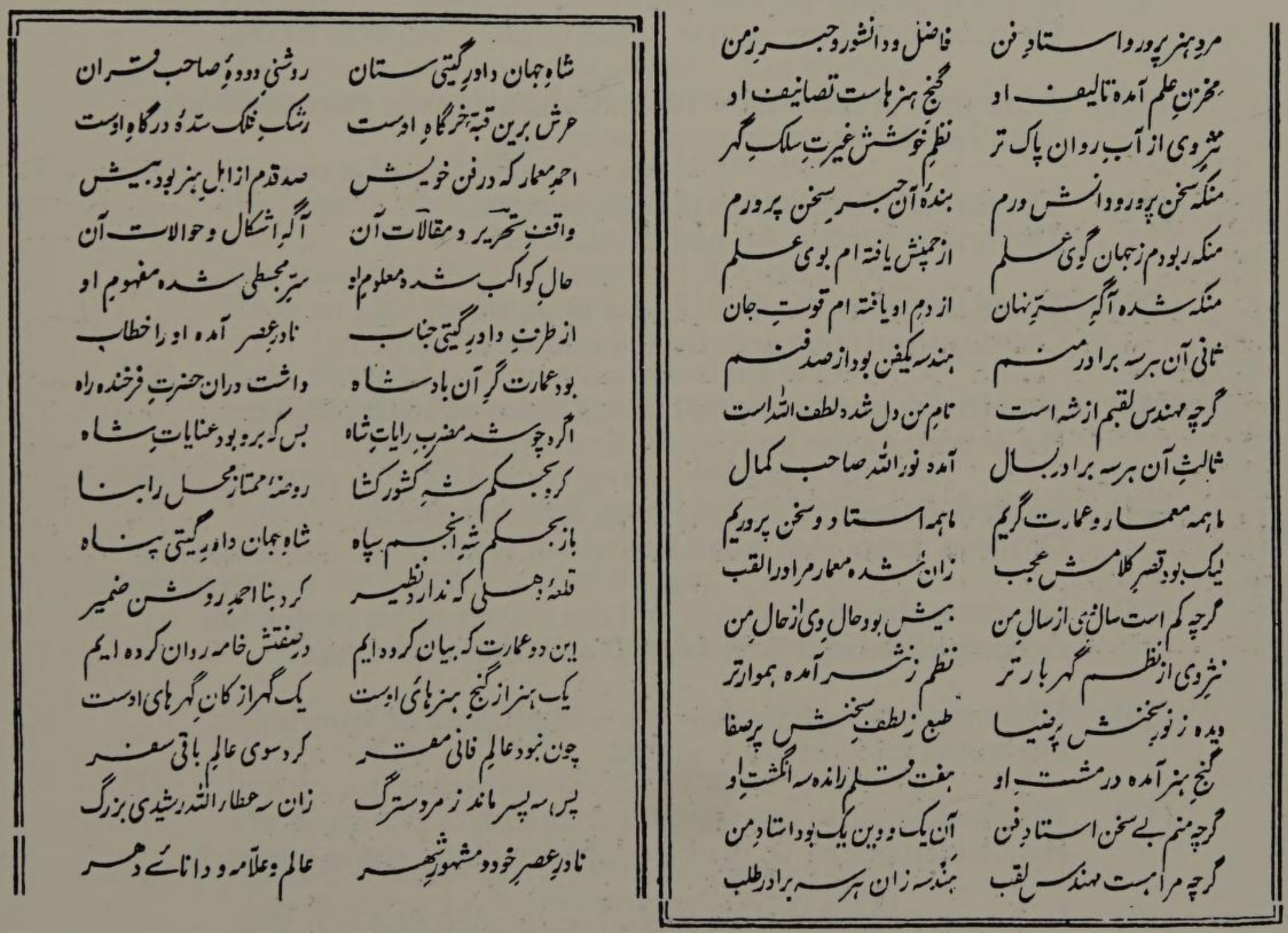
Praise be to Allah, that by the Divine grace,
Laid the foundation of the grand auspicious building.

The friend of the generous, 'Abd al-Latif,
The like of whom the world has never produced,

Founded this bridge in Peshawar.
O God! may it last as long as the world endures!

For the date of its completion, "Muhandis" [engineer] said:
"*May this existing auspicious construction perpetuate for ever*!" [1039/1629]

## 37.10. MENTIONS OF USTAD AHMAD IN *DIWAN-I-MUHANDIS* OF HIS SON LUTF ALLAH



مرد ہنر پرور و استادِ فن — فاضل و دانشور و حبرِ زمن
مخزنِ علم آمدہ تالیف او — گنجِ ہنرہاست تصانیف او
نثرِ وی از آبِ روان پاک تر — نظمِ خوشش غیرتِ سلکِ گہر
منکہ سخن پرور و دانش ورم — بندۂ آن حبرِ سخن پرورم
منکہ ربودم زجہان گوی علم — از چمنش یافتہ ام بوی علم
منکہ شدہ آگہِ سرِّ نہان — از دمِ او یافتہ ام قوتِ جان
ثانی آن ہر سہ برادر منم — ہندسہ یکفن بود از صد فنم
گرچہ مہندس لقبم از شہ است — نامِ من دل شدہ لطف اللہ است
ثالثِ آن ہر سہ برادر بسال — آمدہ نور اللہ صاحب کمال
ما ہمہ معمار و عمارت گریم — ما ہمہ استاد و سخن پروریم
لیک بود قصرِ کلامش عجب — زان شدہ معمار مرا در لقب
گرچہ کم است سالِ وی از سالِ من — بیش بود حالِ وی از حالِ من
نثرِ وی از نظم گہربار تر — نظم ز نثر آمدہ ہموار تر
دیدہ ز نورِ سخنش پرضیا — طبع ز لطفِ سخنش پرصفا
گنجِ ہنر آمدہ در مشتِ او — ہفت قلم رانده سہ انگشتِ او
گرچہ منم بے سخن استادِ فن — آن یک و وین یک بود استادِ من
گرچہ مرا ہست مہندس لقب — ہندسہ زان ہر سہ برادر طلب

شاہِ جہان دادرِ گیتی ستان — روشنیِ دودۂ صاحب قران
عرش برین قبۂ خرگاہِ اوست — رشکِ فلک سدۂ درگاہِ اوست
احمدِ معمار کہ در فن خویش — صد قدم از اہلِ ہنر بود بیش
واقفِ تحریر و مقالات آن — آگہِ اشکال و حوالات آن
حالِ کواکب شدہ معلوم او — سیرِ مجسطی شدہ مفہوم او
از طرفِ دادرِ گیتی جناب — نادرِ عصر آمدہ او را خطاب
بود عمارت گرِ آن بادشاہ — داشت دران حضرتِ فرخندہ راہ
اگرچہ شد مضربِ رایاتِ شاہ — بس کہ برو بود عنایاتِ شاہ
کرد بحکم شہِ کشور کشا — روضۂ ممتاز محل را بنا
باز بحکم شہِ انجم سپاہ — شاہ جہان دادرِ گیتی پناہ
قلعۂ دہلی کہ ندارد نظیر — کرد بنا احمدِ روشن ضمیر
این دو عمارت کہ بیان کردہ ایم — در صفتش خامہ روان کردہ ایم
یک ہنر از گنجِ ہنرہای اوست — یک گہر از کانِ گہرہای اوست
چون نبود عالمِ فانی مقر — کرد سوی عالمِ باقی سفر
پس سہ پسر ماند ز مرد سترگ — زان سہ عطاء اللہ رشیدی بزرگ
نادرِ عصر خود و مشہورِ شہر — عالم و علامہ و دانائے دہر

(1) Shah Jahan the world-conquering ruler;
The light of the House of Sahib Qiran [i.e., Timur]

(2) The highest empyrean is the dome of his pavilion;
The threshold of his court is the envy of the Sky.

(3) Ahmad the architect (*mi'mar*), who in his art
Was a hundred steps ahead of the masters of this art,

(4) Conversant with the Euclid's Propositions (*Tahrir*) and its Discourses,
And acquainted with all their particulars,

(5) The movements of the planets and stars had become known to him,
The mysteries of the Almagest had been understood by him.

(6) And from that King of heavenly Threshold,
He was bestowed the title, "Wonder of the Age" (*Nadir-i-'Asr*).

(7) He was the architect of the King;
And had access to the auspicious royal presence.

(8) When Agra became the camping ground of that King's standards,
As he had been the recipient of the Royal favors,

(9) At the orders of the world-conquering king,
He constructed the edifice of the tomb of Mumtaz Mahal.

(10) After that, at the order of that King having the stars as his army,
Shah Jahan, the world-conquering king,

(11) The fort of Delhi, which is without equal,
The bright-minded Ahmad constructed.

(12) These two edifices which I have mentioned,
Constitute just one gem from the mine of his gems.

(13) Since the transitory world is not a place of lasting sojourn,
He undertook the journey to the everlasting world.

(14) From that wonderful man, three sons remained,
Of those three, 'Ata Allah Rushdi [or Rashidi] is the eldest.

(15) He was a cherisher of skill and the master of his profession
Accomplished and learned, and a servant of the Age.

(16) His compilations have become a storehouse of knowledge,
His works are a treasure of arts.

(17) His prose is purer than flowing water;
His blessed poetry is an object of envy of the string of pearls.

(18) I who am a cherisher of speech [i.e., a poet] and learning,
Am a slave of that speech-cherishing savant.

(19) I who have carried away the ball of knowledge from the world,
Have received the fragrance of knowledge from his garden.

(20) I who have become acquainted with hidden mysteries,
Have received the soul's strength from his breath.

(23) I am the second of those three brothers;

Mathematics (*hindsa*) is only one of my hundred arts.

(24) Even though Muhandis is a title given to me by the King,
The proper name of this distracted [mystic] is Lutf Allah.

(25) The third of those three brothers, in years,
Is Nur Allah, the Master of Perfection.

(26) We all are architects and builders;
We all are masters and cherishers of speech [poets].

(27) But, the palace of his speech is wonderful;
Therefore, Mi'mar [architect] has come to be his title.

(28) Even though his age is less than mine,
His achievements are more than those of mine.

(29) His prose is more pearl-scattering than poetry,
His poetry is more uniform than his prose.

(30) His eye is bright with the light of his poetry,
His mind is pure on account of his graceful speech.

(31) The treasure of art has come within his grasp;
He is an expert calligrapher in all the seven scripts (*haft-qalam*).

(32) Even though I too am a master of the art,
Both this one [Nur Allah] and the other [Ata' Allah] are my teachers.

(33) Even though Muhandis [geometrician] is my title,
You should instead seek geometry from those two brothers.

*Two Chronograms of the Death of Ustad Ahmad*

در زمانِ سعید شاه جهان  شاهِ عالم پناه جم مقدار
نادر العصر رفت و گفت خرد  شد بفردوس احمد معمار

(1) In the auspicious time of Shah Jahan,
The King, the asylum of the world, and of Jam's authority,

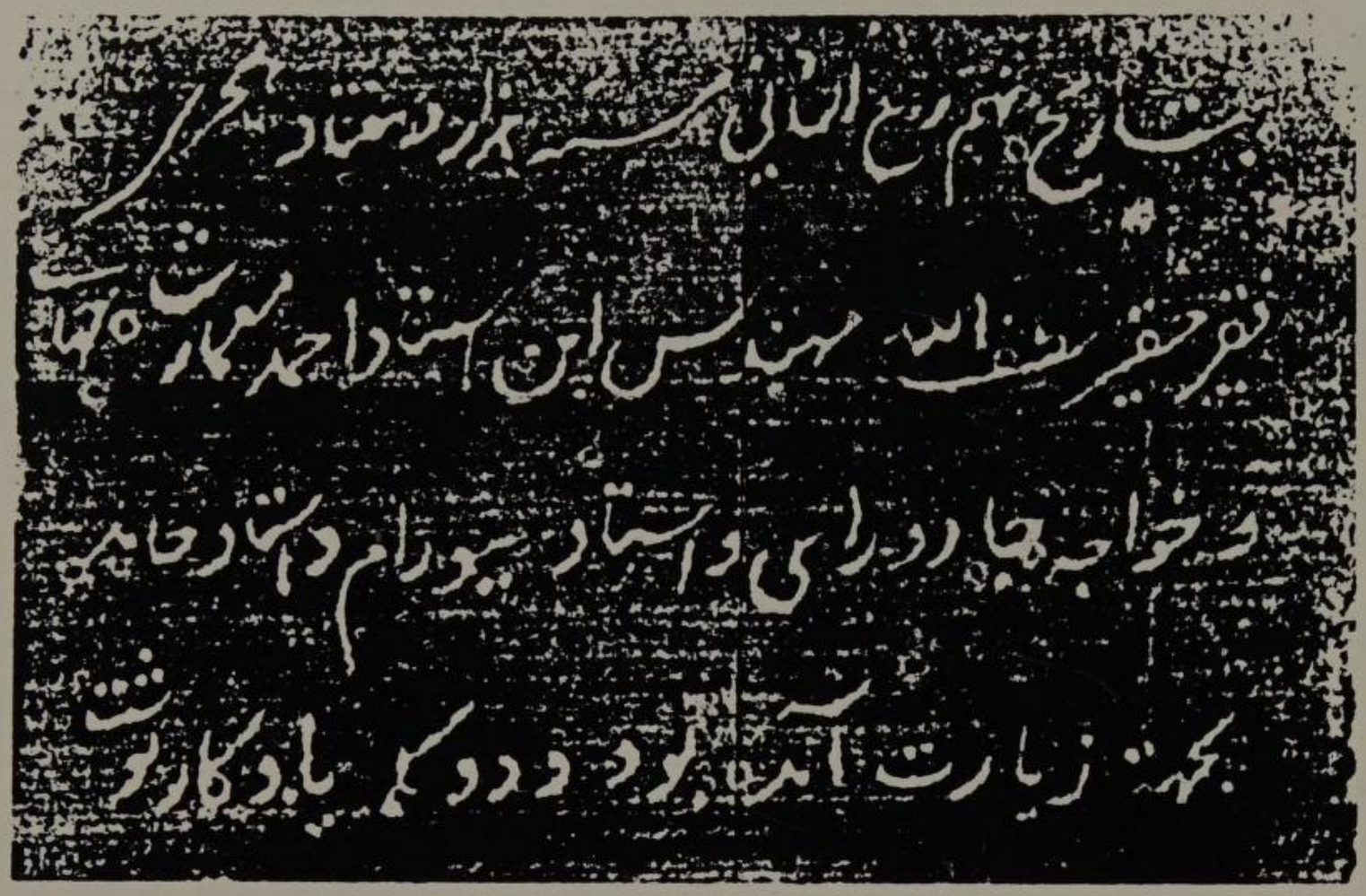
Nadir al-'Asr departed [died] and wisdom said:
"*Ahmad Mi'mar went to Paradise*" [1059/1649]

آن نادر عصر زینت دهر  چون رفت بسوئی ملک سرمد
تاریخ وفات او خرد گفت  محمود العاقبت شد احمد

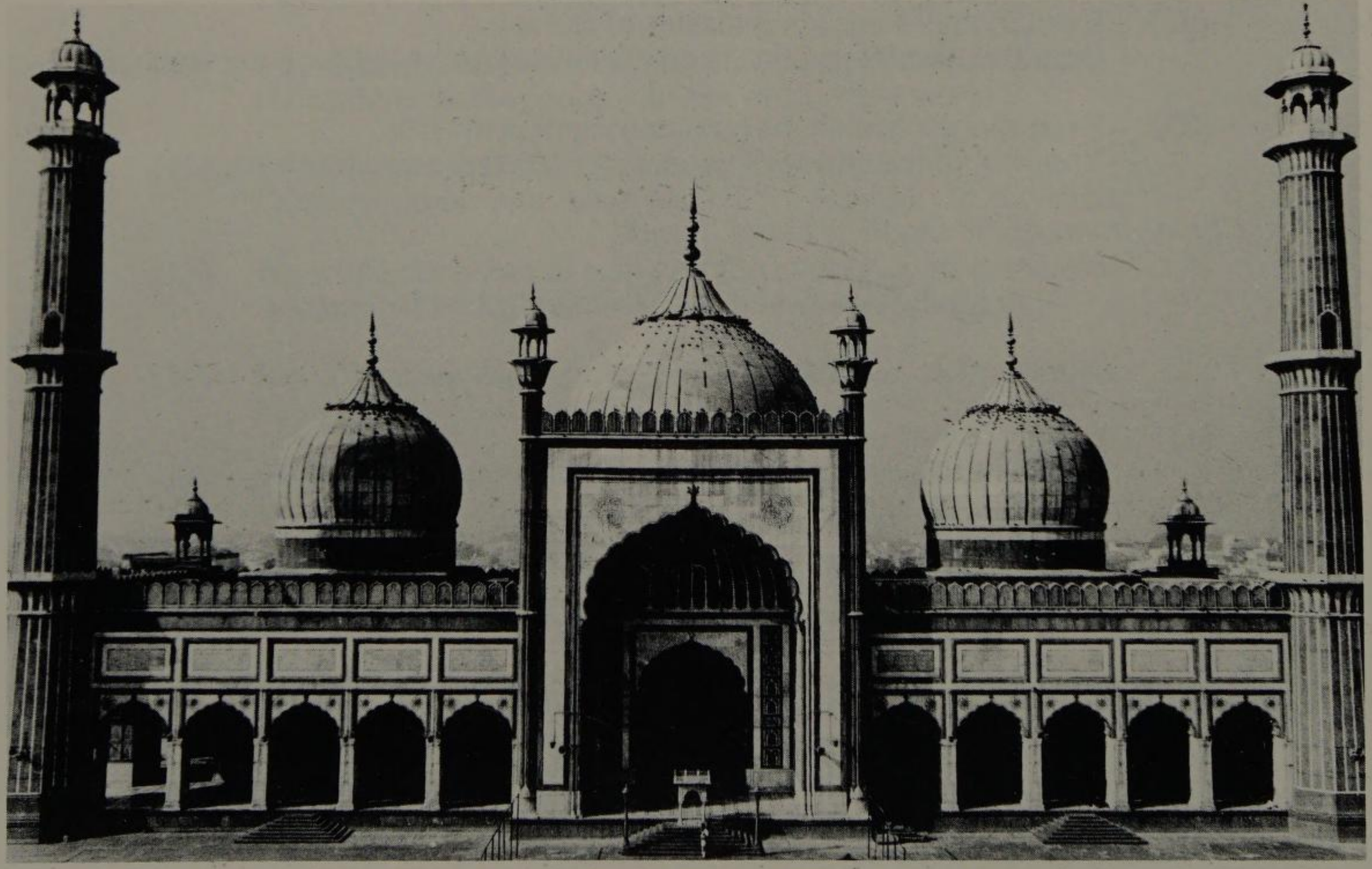
(2) That Nadir-i-'Asr and choice one of the Age,
When he went to the eternal kingdom

Wisdom spoke the date of his death,
"*Ahmad became one of happy* [lit., praised] *end*" [1059/1649]

37.11. INSCRIPTION OF LUTF ALLAH AT MANDU, DATED 1070



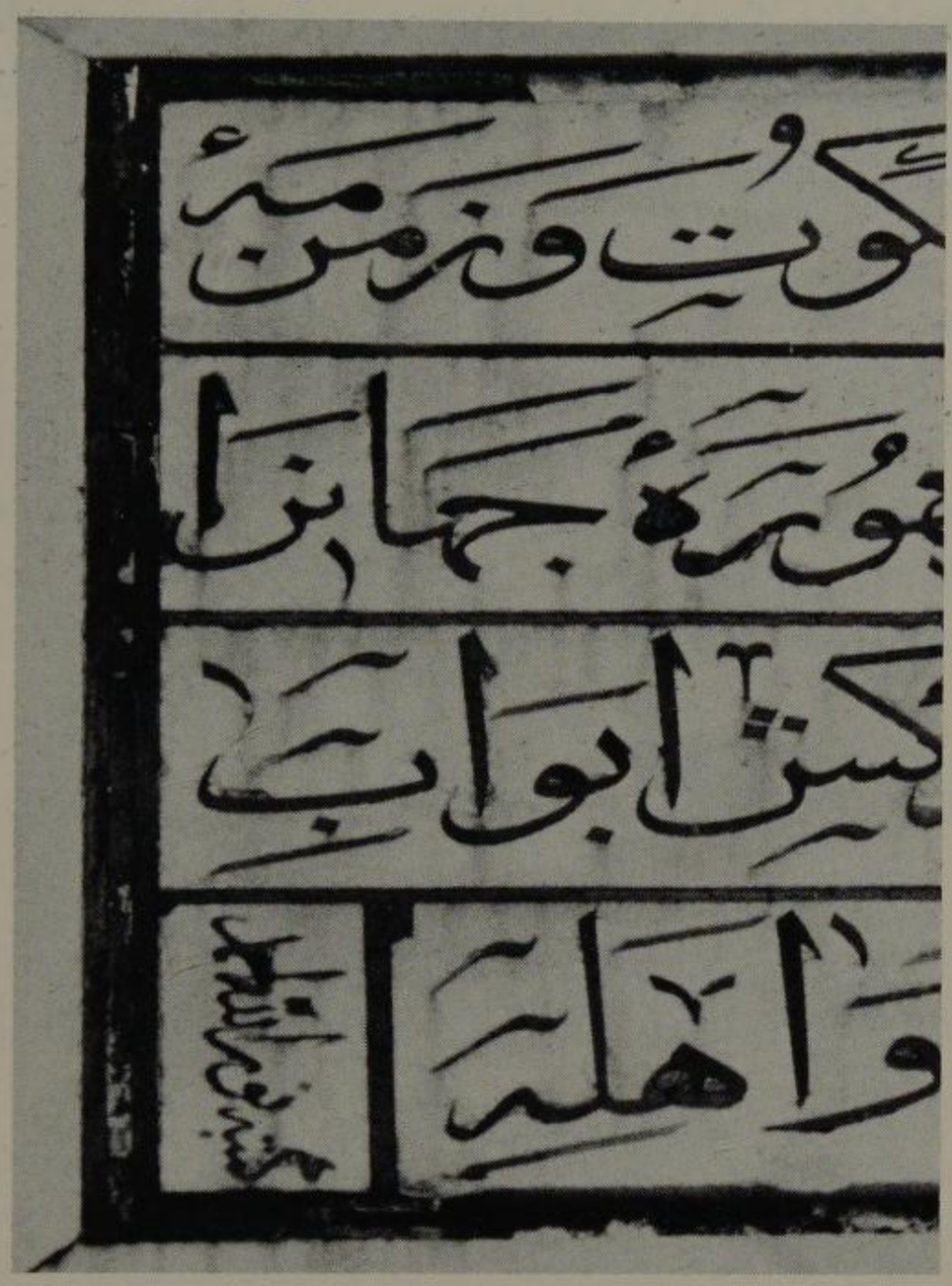
"On the ninth of Rabi' II of the year 1070 Hijri [24 December 1659], the humble beggar Lutf Allah Muhandis, son of Ustad Ahmad Mi'mar Shah Jahani [architect of Shah Jahan], Khwaja Jadu Rai, Ustad Sheo Ram, and Ustad Hamid had come on pilgrimage [to the tomb], and wrote these few words to commemorate it."



159. Delhi, Jami' Masjid, inscribed by Nur Allah, son of Ustad Ahmad; completed 1066/1656.

## 37.12. INSCRIPTION OF NUR ALLAH ON FACADE OF JAMI' MASJID, DELHI

[Although Lutf Allah's *Diwan-i-Muhandis* praises highly the various accomplishments of his younger brother Nur Allah, very little documentation other than literary survives. Among the numerous buildings for which he must have designed the calligraphy, only Shah Jahan's great congregational mosque at Delhi, completed in 1066/1656, bears his signature--in small letters on the facade, at the end of the tenth inscribed dedication panel glorifying Shah Jahan. Although Ustad Ahmad died the year before the Jami' Masjid was started, he may have completed the plans for this magnificent building before his death. It is possible that his son Nur Allah may have served as one of the architects of the mosque, as well as the designer of the calligraphic inscription.]



"Written by Nur Allah, son of Ahmad."

## 37.13. MENTIONS OF USTAD AHMAD AND MAKRAMAT KHAN IN THE *BAGHISTAN* OF IMAM AL-DIN RIYAZI, SON OF LUTF ALLAH MUHANDIS

[The evidence of the *Baghistan* establishes an important connection between Ustad Ahmad and Makramat Khan, the chief supervisor of the Taj's construction. Apparently the two were close friends as well as colleagues, since Makramat Khan was a teacher of Ustad Ahmad's eldest son 'Ata Allah; even though it is here suggested that Ustad Ahmad's technical scientific and engineering knowledge was acknowledged by their contemporaries to be superior to that of Makramat Khan.]

Maulana Murshid of Shiraz [Makramat Khan] was one of the Shi'a divines who studied in Shiraz and other educational centers [in Iran] under his brother Maulana Ruz Bihan of Shiraz and other scholars of the time, and became well versed in philosophical sciences, especially in geometry, astronomy and arithmetic. Thereafter he migrated to India and had the honor of joining the service of the Second Sahib Qiran [Shahjahan] and was his Majordomo (*Mir Saman*) for a long time. Despite

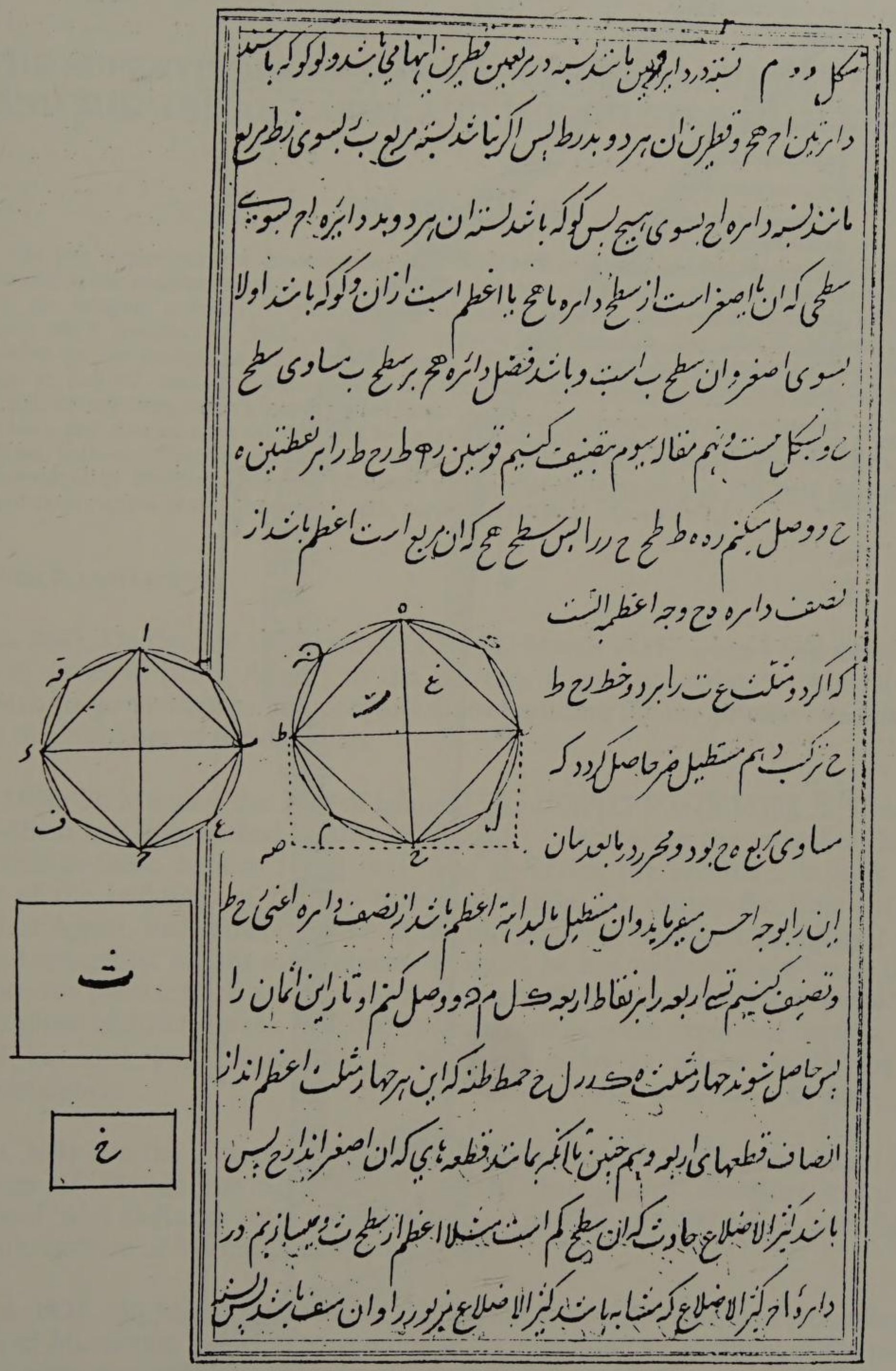
this, he used to teach the philosophical sciences and mathematics. One of his pupils is his nephew [Maulana Ruz Bihan's son], Mirza Ruhullah and the elder brother of my father Lutf Allah Muhandis, namely 'Ata Allah Rashidi. Maulana Murshid died in Shahjahanabad [1059/1649] and left three sons, Mirza 'Abd al-Latif, Mirza Muftakhar and Mirza Musharraf. The father of Lutf Allah [i.e., the grandfather of Riyazi], namely, [Ustad] Ahmad (may God forgive his sins) held debates and discussions with Maulana Murshid and most often the former proved to be right and ultimately the mistakes of the other party became apparent to the persons in the assembly. I Riyazi heard this from my father, who in turn learned it from my grandfather [Ustad Ahmad], and this was also confirmed from other sources.

### 37.14. *MAKHZAN AL-GHARAIB*

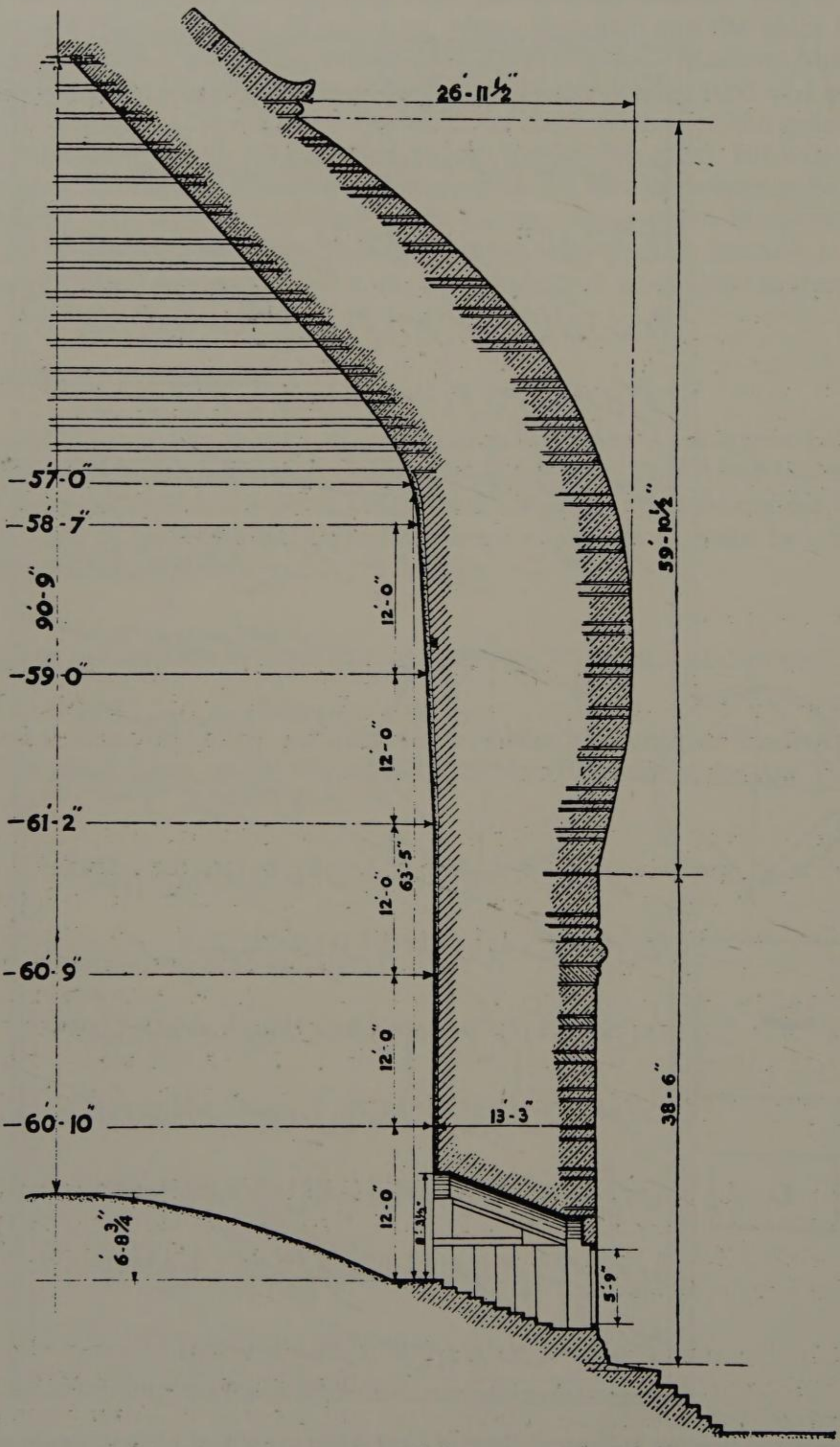
Maulana Imam al-Din Riyazi: His original native place is the city of Lahore. His grandfather adopted residence in Delhi. His father was Lutf Allah Muhandis. He too was much inclined to composing verses and employed the poetic name Muhandis. In the science of mathematics, there have been no equals of these two, father and son, in the country of India.

### 37.15. KHAIR ALLAH, SON OF LUTF ALLAH, PREFACE TO *TAQRIR AL-TAHRIH*

[This work was written by] the sinful slave Abu'l-Khair, entitled Khair Allah Khan, son of Lutf Allah Khan, son of Ahmad *Nadir al-'Asr* ("Wonder of the Age") . . . .




161. Geometric diagrams in *Taqrir al-Tahrir* of Khair Allah, son of Lutf Allah Muhandis, son of Ahmad *Nadir al-'Asr*, composed in 1144/1731.




162. Section drawing of upper dome of the Taj Mahal (after *Ancient India* 6, January 1950, p. 94)

# 38

# THE SUPERVISORS OF CONSTRUCTION, MAKRAMAT KHAN AND MIR 'ABD AL-KARIM, AND THE TRUSTEE AGAH KHAN

## MIR 'ABD AL-KARIM

[Of the two supervisors of construction, Mir 'Abd al-Karim was apparently the elder and more experienced in the practical aspects of building, although Makramat Khan ultimately rose to a far higher rank in the Mughal nobility. Probably born sometime around 1570, 'Abd al-Karim had become Jahangir's chief architect by l615, when the Emperor awarded him the title of Ma'mur Khan in recognition for the palaces he had built at Mandu. Five years later, he constructed other palaces for Jahangir at Lahore, and also started work on the Shah Burj--although this was not finished until 1041/1631, during Shah Jahan's fourth regnal year.

[Within a few months after the death of Mumtaz Mahal, Shah Jahan had 'Abd al-Karim tranferred to Agra from Lahore--where he had also served as provincial Diwan. In early 1633, he was appointed Superintendent of Buildings (*darogha-i-'imarat*) at the capital, remaining in this post throughout the period of construction of the Illumined Tomb, until his transfer in March 1646.]

### 38.1 *TUZUK-I-JAHANGIRI*

**[I, p. 280]** On the 2nd of Farwardin 1024 [22 March 1615] . . . as I had made up my mind to proceed [from Ajmer] to the Deccan, I gave an order to 'Abd al-Karim Ma'muri, to go to Mandu and prepare a new building for my private residence and repair the buildings of the old kings.

**[p. 363]** On Monday, the 23rd of Isfandarmuz 1026 [13 March 1617], . . . I mounted an elephant and approached the fort of Mandu. . . . As before the arrival of the royal standards in these regions I had sent 'Abd al-Karim, the architect, to look to the repair of the buildings of the old rulers in Mandu, he, during the time the camp halted at Ajmer, had repaired some of the old buildings that were capable of repair, and had altogether rebuilt some places. In short, he had made ready a house the like of which for pleasantness and sweetness has probably not been made anywhere else. Nearly three lakhs of rupees, or 2,000 Persian tumans, were expended on this. There should be such grand buildings in all great cities as might be fit for royal accommodation.

**[I, p. 368]** On the 28th of Isfandarmuz 1026 [18 March 1617], as a reward for the buildings of Mandu having been completed through his excellent exertions, I promoted 'Abd al-Karim to the *mansab* rank of 800 *zat* and 400 *suwar*, and dignified him with the title of Ma'mur Khan.

**[II, p. 183]** On Monday the 9th of the Divine month of Azar, corresponding with the 5th of Muharram 1030 [30 November 1620], mounting an elephant of the name of Indra, I went towards the city, scattering coins as I proceeded. After three watches and two gharis of the day had passed, at the selected auspicious hour, having entered

the royal residence, I alighted happily and auspiciously at the building recently brought to completion and finished handsomely by the exertions of Ma'mur Khan. Without exaggeration, charming residences and soul-exciting sitting places had been erected in great beauty and delicacy, adorned and embellished with paintings by rare artists. Pleasant green gardens with all kinds of flowers and sweet-scented herbs deceived the sight.

From head to foot, wherever I look,
A glance plucks the heart's skirt saying, "It is here!"

Altogether, there had been expended on these buildings the sum of seven lakhs of rupees, or 23,000 current tumans of Persia.

38.2 LAHORI

**[Ia, p. 407]** [On 19 Jumada I 1041/13 December 1631,] owing to the transfer of Mir 'Abd al-Karim [from the office of Diwan of the Panjab province], Hakim Jamala Kashi, who had held the charge of the establishment of Her late Majesty the Queen Mumtaz al-Zamani, was exalted by appointment to the said office of Diwan of the Panjab province, and by having his *mansab* rank raised to the level of 1,000 *zat* and 250 *suwar*.

**[p. 474]** [On 22 Rajab 1042/2 February 1633,] Mir 'Abd al-Karim obtained lofty stature through appointment to the office of Superintendent of Buildings (*darogha-i-'imarat*) of the buildings of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad.

**[Ib, p. 3]** [On 26 Rajab 1043/26 January 1634,] Mir 'Abd al-Karim, the superintendent of buildings of the Royal Palace (*daulat khana*) of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad was favored with the mansab of 1,000 *zat* and 200 *suwar*.

**[II, p. 103]** [On 1 Rabi' II 1048/12 August 1638,] Mir 'Abd al-Karim, the superintendent of the buildings of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad was honored by an increase in his mansab to the level of 1,500 *zat* and 200 *suwar*.

**[p. 329-330]** [At the time of the Twelfth 'Urs, Zi'l-Qa'da 1052/February 1643] . . . and the expenditure on all the edifices [of the Illumined Tomb] which have been described in detail above, and which were completed in a space of twelve years under the superintendence of Makramat Khan and Mir 'Abd al-Karim, amounts to 50 lakhs of rupees.

**[II, p. 491]** [On 3 Safar 1056/21 March 1646,] On the transfer of Mir 'Abd al-Karim, Muttalib, son of Mu'tamad Khan, had his head raised high through appointment to the posts of Deputy Chancellor (*bakhshi*), Recorder (*waqi'a-nawis*), and Superintendent of Buildings (*Darogha-i-'Imarat*).

## 38.3. SALIH

**[III, p. 423]** Chandrabhan Barahman was in the beginning of his career attached to Mir 'Abd al-Karim, the supervisor of buildings (*mir-i-'imarat*) at Lahore.

## 38.4. TWO INSCRIPTIONS OF MIR 'ABD AL-KARIM IN THE LAHORE FORT

*Inscription on a palace entrance, dated 1027/1617-18*

بسال دواز دهم از جلوس مقدس بندگان عالیحضرت شاهنشاه ظل الهه سلیمان جاه کیو مرث بارگاه
سکندر سپاه خلافت پناه نورالدین پادشاه ابن جلال‌الدین پادشاه غازی مطابق سال هزار و بیست و هفت
هجری عمارت این دولتخانه همایون باهتمام کمترین مریدان و غلامان قدوی معمور خان صورت اتمام پذیرفت

"In the twelfth year of the blessed accession of His Exalted Majesty, the Shadow of God--a Solomon in dignity, a Kayomars in state and an Alexander in arms--the Asylum of the Caliphate, the Emperor Nur al-Din Jahangir, son of the Emperor Jalal al-Din Ghazi, corresponding with 1027 Hijri [1617-18], the building of this auspicious palace was completed under the superintendence of his most humble disciple and slave, the humble servant Ma'mur Khan [Mir 'Abd al-Karim]."

*Inscription on Shah Burj gate, dated fourth regnal year of Shah Jahan, 1041/1631*

شاه جم جاه سلیمان قدر کیوان بارگاه - کز سپهر و مهر برتر برده رایات جلال
ثانی صاحبقران شاه جهان کز عدل و جود - نیستش نوشیروان مانند را فریدون همال
شاه برجی حکم کرد احداث کز فرط علو - هست بیرون همچو عرش اعظم از وهم و خیال
در صفا و رفعت و لطف و هوا برجی چنین - از حصار چرخ ننمودست و ننماید جمال
بنده یکدل مرید معتقد عبدالکریم - بعد اتمام عمارت یافت این تاریخ سال
دائما چون دولت این بادشاه جم سپاه - این همایون برج عالی باد از آفت بے زوال
سنه ۱۰۴۱ هجري ۴ جلوس

The King, a Jamshid in dignity, a Solomon in grandeur, a Saturn in state,
Who has carried the banners of his glory beyond the sky and the sun,

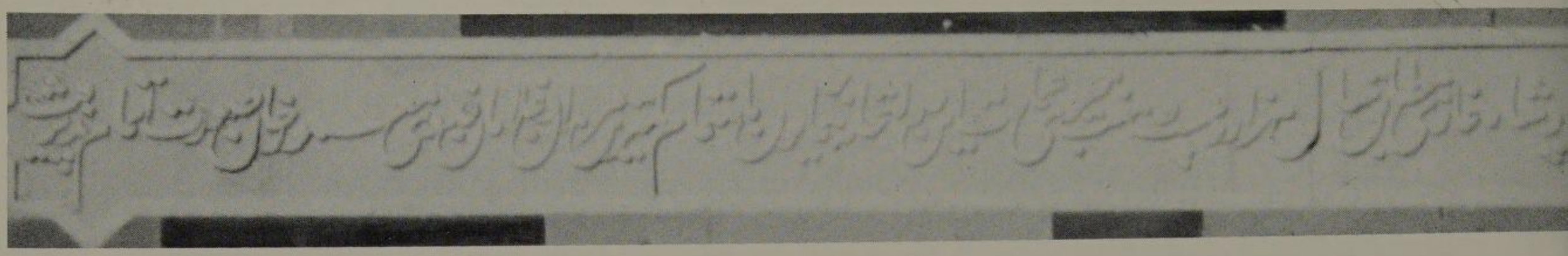
The Second Sahib Qiran, Shah Jahan, to whom in justice and generosity,
Naushirrwan is no equal, nor Afridun no peer,

Ordered a Shah Burj to be erected, which for its immense height,
Is like the exalted Divine Throne, beyond imagination and conception.

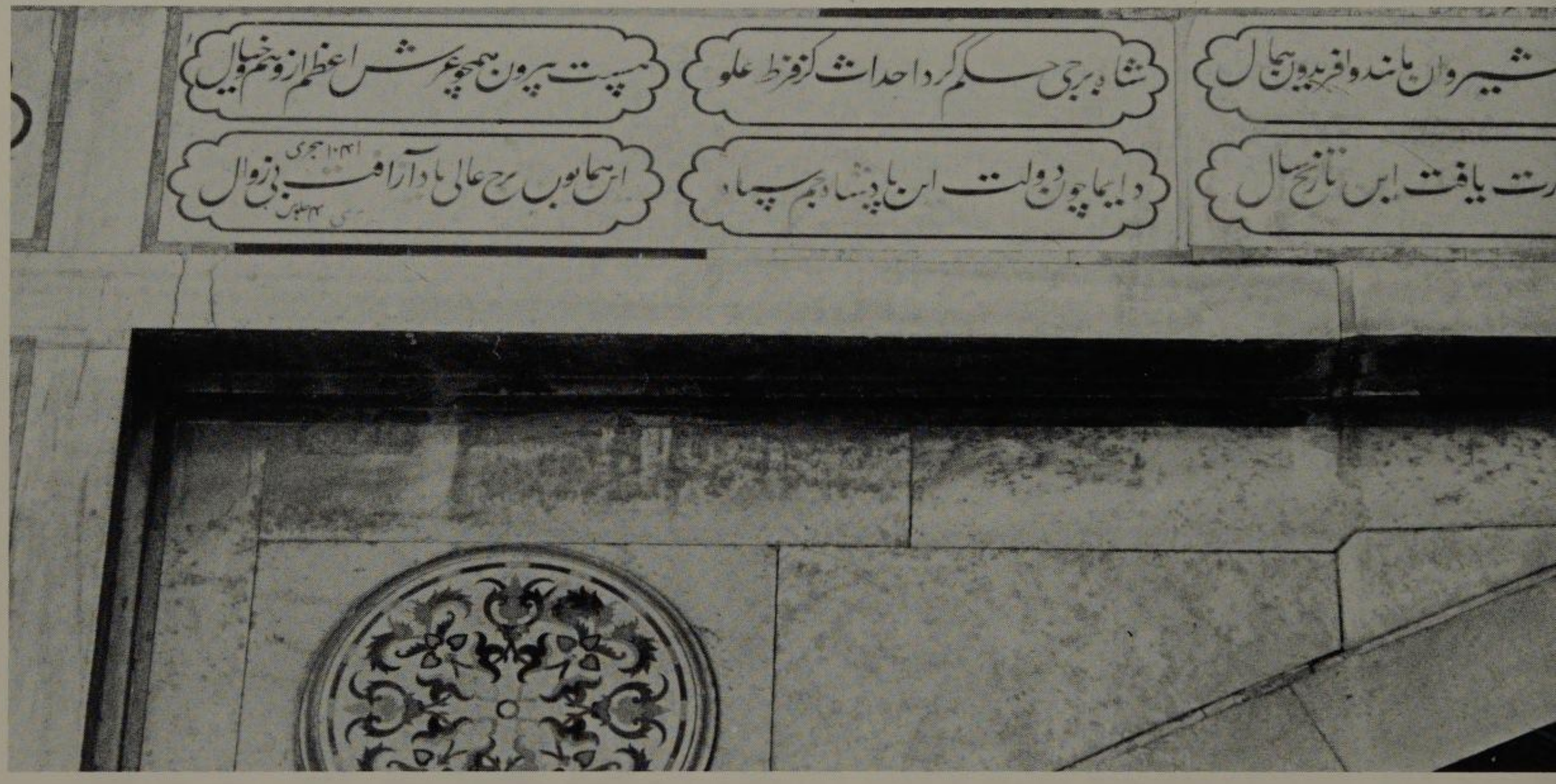
In purity, height, elegance and airiness, such a tower
Has never appeared from the castle of the sky nor ever will.

The sincere servant and faithful disciple, 'Abd al-Karim,
After the completion of the building devised this date:

Forever, like the fortune of this King, a Jamshid in arms,
"*May this auspicious lofty tower remain safe from destruction*!"
The year 1041 Hijri, fourth year of the accession.

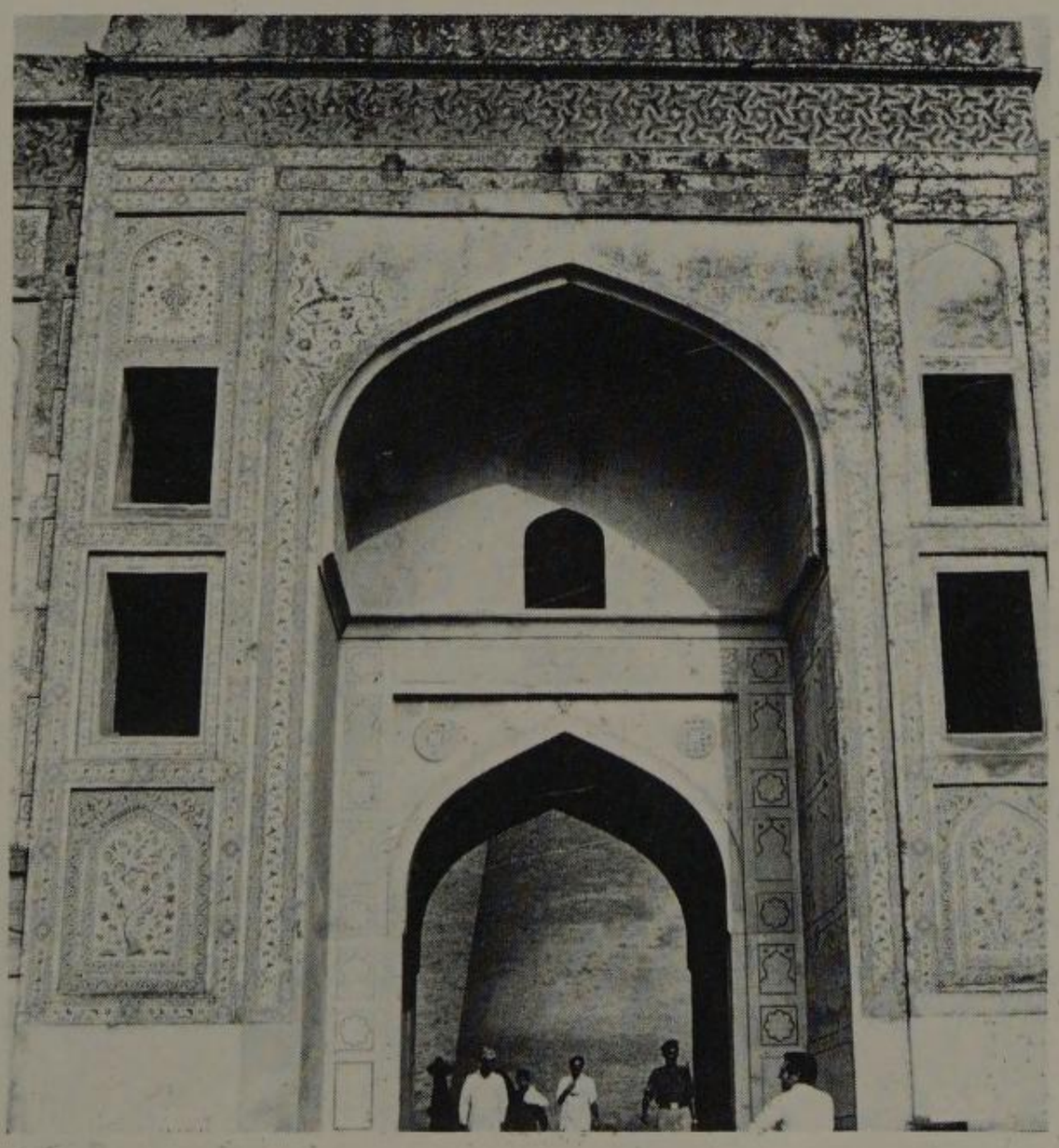


163. Lahore fort, Jahangiri palace, inscription of architect Ma'mur Khan, title of 'Abd al-Karim, dated 1027/1617-18.



164. Lahore fort, gateway to Royal Tower (*Shah Burj*), inscription of architect 'Abd al-Karim, dated 1041/1632-33.

165. Lahore fort, facade of Jahangiri palace, built by Ma'mur Khan.



166. Lahore fort, facade of gateway to Royal Tower, built by 'Abd al-Karim.

## MAKRAMAT KHAN

[Makramat Khan was the title of Mulla Murshid of Shiraz, who first arrived in India during the reign of Jahangir, and who later rose to an extremely high rank in the Mughal nobility under Shah Jahan. Appointed "Minister of Royal Works" shortly after the accession, he was in charge of all activities of the various royal workshops, from manufacturing to architectural construction. Besides his scholarly expertise and theoretical knowledge in the areas of mathematics and astronomy, he must have been thoroughly familiar with practical building techniques; the sources, however, characterize him only as an administrator, never as an architect.

[Literary evidence cited above suggests that Makramat Khan had been a long-time friend of the actual architect Ustad Ahmad, whose son 'Ata Allah he apparently instructed in the theoretical sciences--probably sometime around 1610-15. Evidently their friendship and close professional relationshp continued throughout the period of construction of both the Taj Mahal and the Shahjahanabad fort. In 1641, Makramat Khan was appointed Governor of Delhi and assumed charge of the construction of Shah Jahan's vast new fort and city. Through "zeal and efficiency," he was able to bring the fort to completion in April 1648, just one and a half years before his death in November 1649--coincidentally the year Ustad Ahmad died as well.]

### 38.5. LAHORI

**[Ia, p. 191]** [At the first Nauroz celebration after Shah Jahan's accession, on 12 Rajab 1037/18 March 1628,] Mulla Murshid Shirazi was awarded a robe of honor, a mansab of 1,000 *zat* and 200 *suwar*, the title of Makramat Khan, and the office of Minister of Royal Works (*diwan-i-buyutat*).

**[p. 347]** [On 1 Rajab 1040/3 February 1631,] Makramat Khan, was favored through an increase in his mansab rank and raised to the level of 1,000 *zat* and 600 *suwar*.

**[pp. 361-62]** [During Sha'ban 1040/March 1631,] . . . to Muhammad 'Ali Beg, the ambassador from the ruler of Iran, who in compliance with the sky-exalted royal order, had started for Burhanpur from the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad, a rich robe of honor was sent through Makramat Khan, the Minister of Royal Works (*diwan-i-buyutat*).

**[p. 369]** [On 5 Ramadan 1040/7 April 1631,] the offices of Minister (*diwan*), Deputy Chancellor (*bakhshi*), Recorder (*waqi'a-nawis*), in addition to Minister of Royal Works (*diwan-i-buyutat*) of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad, . . . were entrusted to Makramat Khan.

**[p. 428]** [On 1 Zi'l-Hijja 1041/19 June 1632,] when the Emperor was encamped in Dehra Bagh at Agra,] Makramat Khan was favored with the increased mansab of 1,500 *zat* and 600 *suwar*.

**[pp. 460-61]** [And on 8 Sha'ban 1042/18 February 1633,] . . . following the marriage of that highest star of the constellation of glory [Prince Dara Shikoh], the Emperor ordered that--for the arranging of the assembly of a second function of happiness and ensuring the pleasure of a second assembly of delight [i.e., the

marriage of Prince Shah Shuja']--Makramat Khan, the Diwan-i-Buyutat, who possesses extensive knowledge of the science of astrology, and is also superintendent of the astrologers, should select an auspicious hour in concert with the experts in Greek and Indian astronomy.

**[p. 542]** [On 11 Rabi' II 1043/15 October 1633,] Makramat Khan, who had been exalted to the office of the civil administration (*faujdari*) of the environs of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad, also received the honor of having his mansab rank raised to the level of 2,000 *zat* and 1,000 *suwar*.

**[II, p. 103]** [On 1 Rabi' II 1048/13 July 1638,] Makramat Khan, the Diwan-i-Buyutat, on account of his zeal and efficiency, was encompassed with the favors of that servant-rewarding Monarch granted signal honor through the bequest of a robe of honor and appointment to the high office of Majordomo (*mir-i-saman*).

**[p. 244]** [On 23 Jumada II 1051/29 September 1641,] Makramat Khan was exalted with a robe of honor; an increase of 500 *zat* and 1,000 *suwar* in his mansab, thereby raising it to the level of 3,000 *zat* and 3,000 *suwar*; the bequest of a drum, a horse with silver saddle, and appointment to the post of governor of the province of the Abode of the Kingdom Delhi.

**[p. 320]** [On 14 Shawwal 1052/5 January 1643,] . . . after going around the [new Shahjahanabad] fort and its buildings, which had not yet attained completion, His Majesty instructed Makramat Khan, who is the governor of the province of the Abode of the Kingdom Delhi, and also the superintendent in charge of these buildings, to make a few changes which had occurred to the far-seeing mind.

**[pp. 329-30]** [On the occasion of the Twelfth 'Urs, during Zi'l-Qa'da 1052/February 1643,] . . . and the expenditure on all the buildings [of the Illumined Tomb], which have been described in detail above, and which were completed in a space of about twelve years, under the superintendence of Makramat Khan and Mir 'Abd al-Karim, amounted to 50 lakhs of rupees.

**[p. 410]** [On 23 Zi'l-Hijja 1054/20 February 1645,] . . . the Emperor had a look at the said fort [of Shahjahanabad under construction], and the celestial buildings being constructed inside that fort and gave a present of 5,000 rupees to its staff and workers. And a few alterations which occurred to the far-seeing mind were conveyed by way of instructions to Makramat Khan.

**[p. 425]** [On 12 Jumada I 1055/6 July 1645,] . . . since Makramat Khan, the governor of the province of the Abode of the Kingdom Delhi, had carried on satisfactorily the administration of the said province, the civil government (*faujdari*) and personal revenue-estate administration (*tuyuldari*) of Mathura and Mahaban, and the proper administration of its roads and the watch and ward of its outlying areas were also entrusted to him. And through an increase of 1,000 *zat* and 1,000 *suwar* of the *do-aspa, sih-aspa* grades, his mansab was fixed at the level of 4,000 *zat* and *suwar*, with 2,000 *suwar* being now of the *do-aspa, sih-aspa* grades.

**[p. 504]** [On 6 Rabi' II 1056/22 May 1646,] . . . the plan of the covered bazar of Peshawar, which Amir al-Umara ['Ali Mardan Khan] had constructed of mortar and bricks on the Baghdadi octagon (*musamman-i-baghdadi*) style, with two open [unroofed] markets at the intersecting plaza (*charsu*), from which roads go in the four directions, and which at the time of the passing of the sublime cavalcade came to His Majesty's bounty-spreading notice and had received the honor of royal praise, was sent to Makramat Khan, the governor of the Abode of the Kingdom Delhi, to whom is entrusted the superintendence (*ihtimam*) of the construction of the blessed fort--which is one of the creations of His Majesty the Khaqan--and of the bounty-spreading edifices which have been built therein, so that he may arrange for a bazar on a similar plan to be built inside the fort from the entrance of the forecourt (*jilaukhana*) of the Hall of Public and Private Audience (*daulat-khana-i-khass wa-'am*) to the gate which opens in the direction of the Abode of Sovereignty Lahore.

**[p. 610]** [On 8 Shawwal 1056/17 November 1646,] having converted 1,000 additional *suwar* to the *do-aspa, sih-aspa* grades, the Emperor favored Makramat Khan with the mansab of 4,000 *zat* and *suwar*, with 3,000 of the latter now of the *do-aspa, sih-aspa* grades.

### 38.6. *MA'ASIR AL-UMARA*

His name was Mulla Murshid and he came from Shiraz. In the beginning of his career, he was for a long time associated with Mahabat Khan, and later entered the service of Jahangir. In the beginning of Shah Jahan's reign, he received the title of Makramat Khan, and was appointed to the office of Superintendent of Royal Works (*diwan-i-buyutat*) and the rank of 1,000 *zat* and 200 *suwar*. In the fourth year he had the charge of the administration (*diwan*), financial affairs (*bakhshi*), news-writing (*waqi'a-nawis*), and royal works (*buyutat*) of Akbarabad.

In the eighth year, the Bundela territory was visited by the Emperor, and Makramat Khan was appointed to conquer the fort of Jhansi--which was one of the strong forts of the unfortunate Raja Jujhar [Singh Bundela]--and to search for his buried treasure. The garrison, overawed by the majesty of the royal forces which they had seen with their own eyes, lost courage and asked for quarter. So impregnable a fort--fully supplied with all munitions of warfare and situated on top of a hill surrounded by a dense and thorny forest--surrendered without a fight. Makramat Khan unearthed from the hidden places in Jhansi and Datia 28 lakhs of rupees, and arriving at the court produced them before the emperor Shah Jahan. And after visiting that beautiful country, which for abundance of streams and cascades was the envy of the ever-glorious Kashmir, the Emperor crossed the Narbada at the end of the year. Makramat Khan was then sent as an envoy to 'Adil Shah, the ruler of Bijapur, who regardless of consequences had delayed sending the tribute and had given protection to those of the Nizam Shahi troops who had escaped the sword. By mingling threats with inducement, Makramat Khan brought him on to the path of obedience, and in

the ninth year returned with a tribute and an elephant which was the finest of its species and bore the name Gajraj.

Later Makramat Khan was honored by appointment to the high office of Majordomo (*mir-i-saman*). In the beginning of the fifteenth year [23 Jumada II 1051/29 September 1641], his rank was increased to that of 3,000 *zat* and *suwar*, and he was granted kettle-drums and appointed governor of the province of Delhi. In the eighteenth year, on the transfer of A'zam Khan, he was in addition to this office, appointed civil administrator (*faujdar*) and estate-holder (*jagirdar*) of Mathura and Mahaban; and as a result of an increase of 1,000 *zat* and *suwar*, his rank became 4,000 *zat* and *suwar* . . . .

*Description of the City of Shahjahanabad*

As the exalted Emperors always had it in their minds to adorn their reigns by some permanent remains, and signalize their times by the establishment of some everlasting landmarks, consequently this wish was reflected from the mind of Shah Jahan in the conception of a city on the banks of the Jumna. After extensive search, the engineers [and architects, Ustad Ahmad and Ustad Hamid,] selected a site which was situated close to the Abode of the Sultanate Delhi, between its outskirts and the fort of Nurgarh. On the 25th of Zi'l-Hijja of the twelfth year, 1048 [?19 April 1639], in accordance to royal orders, the building arrangements were assigned to Ghairat Khan, the Governor of Delhi and nephew of 'Abd Allah Khan *Firoz Jang*. And on the 9th of Muharram 1048 [12 May 1639], during the same regnal year, the foundations of that impregnable fortress were laid. And a huge contingent of trained stone-masons, skilled in both plain and decorative work, and builders and carpenters were brought from all parts of the Empire, in accordance to royal orders, and building work was started. But after only a part of the foundations had been laid, and some necessary materials collected, Ghairat Khan was nominated Governor of Thatta, and the governorship of the province of Delhi and the arrangements for the constructions of the lofty buildings were therefore transferred to Allahwirdi Khan; and in two years and some days, he was able to raise the walls of the fort to a height of ten yards along the river bank.

After that the governorship of the said province and the control of the building operations were transferred to Makramat Khan, who held the high office of Majordomo (*mir-i-saman*). As a result of his unstinted efforts, this huge fort with its heavenly appurtenances was completed in the twentieth year . . . at a cost of 60 lakhs of rupees, after nine years, three months and some days . . . .

And on the 24th of Rabi' I 1058 [18 April 1648], in the twenty-first year of the reign, which day had been selected by the astrologers for the royal entry, orders were issued for arranging the paraphernalia of a royal feast and convivial entertainment . . . . And Mir Yahya Kashi composed the following chronogram for the date of completion of this great edifice, and received a reward of 1,000 rupees:

"Shahjahanabad was established by Shah Jahan"
(*shud shahajanabad az shah jahan abad* = 1058/1648)

On the completion of these buildings Makramat Khan was granted an increase of 1,000 *zat* and *suwar*, and as a result his rank became 5,000 *zat* and *suwar*, of which 3,000 *suwar* were of the *do-aspa, sih-aspa* grades. In the twenty-third year of the reign, corresponding to Zi'l-Qa'da 1059 Hijri [November 1649], he died at Shahjahanabad.

Makramat Khan was well known for his wealth and riches. It is said that one day, Shah Jahan was looking at maps of Baghdad and Isfahan, where the bazars were octagonal and covered. As these appealed to his fancy, he remarked that those in the new city had not been similarly constructed, and that the city had not been finished as he would have liked; and he commented unfavorably on this matter to Makramat Khan. From that day Makramat Khan used to say that if the city were to be named after him, he would repay into the treasury all that had been spent on its construction . . . . [In the new city, Makramat Khan had offered one of the three gardens in the large Sahibabad garden complex, 486 yards in length, as a *peshkash* offering, and Shah Jahan presented it to Begam Sahib (Princess Jahanara).]

. . . Makramat Khan had a son by the name of Muhammad Latif. In the twenty-second year of the reign, he was appointed civil administrator (*faujdar*) of the Miyan Doab; and Ruh Allah, the brother's son of Makramat Khan, held a suitable *mansab* rank.

## AGAH KHAN

[In July 1635, the trusted eunuch Agah Khan was placed in charge of the civil administration (*faujdari*) of the environs of Agra, a post which also involved jurisdiction and protection of the Illumined Tomb. In addition, he was at some point also designated the trustee (*mutawali*) of the Tomb, which would have involved supervision of the collection of revenues and disbursal of funds from the accumulated treasury. In January 1653, Agah Khan was dismissed from his post for mismanagement of some sort; he subsequently supervised the construction of a royal hunting lodge a few miles east of Agra, situated on the Jumna river, to which Shah Jahan paid a brief visit in December of the same year. Exactly four years later, in December 1657, Agah Khan died, and another eunuch, Mahram Khan, was appointed the new trustee of the Tomb.]

38.7. LAHORI

**[p. 101]** [On 16 Muharram 1045/2 July 1635,] Agah, the Khwajasara, was honored with the title of Khan and the civil administration (*faujdari*) of this side of the river of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad.

**[p. 280]** [On 23 Rabi' II 1047/14 September 1637,) Agah Khan, the Khwajasara, had his head raised high through the bequest of a robe of honor, having his mansab increased to the level of 1,000 *zat* and *suwar*, as well as the administration (*faujdari*) of this side of the river Jumna [at Akbarabad].

**[p. 610]** [On 1 Shawwal 1056/10 October 1646,] Agah Khan, the Faujdar of the environs of the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad, was favored by having his mansab raised to the level of 1,000 *zat* and *suwar*, with all of the latter now converted to the *do-aspa, sih-aspa* grades.

38.8. SALIH

**[III, p. 157]** [On 25 Safar 1063/23 January 1653,] the *faujdari* of the environs of Agra, the Abode of the Caliphate Akbarabad, on the transfer of Agah Khan, who had not performed it well, was entrusted to the charge of *'Umdat al-Mulk* Sa'd Allah Khan.

**[p. 176]** When the edifice of the hunting-lodge of Samughar had deteriorated due to bad planning [?], Agah Khan, under the sublime order had constructed a small (*mukhtasar*) but pleasant building in the village of Imadpur overlooking the river, at a distance of about half a *kos* [i.e., one mile] this side of Samugarh, at a cost of 80,000 rupees, and brought [its completion] to the august notice. Whereupon, His Majesty, having graced that place with his presence, passed one night there in perfect joy and happiness. And on the 29th of Muharram 1064 [20 December 1653], having started at two *pahars* and two and a half *gharis* of the day, he turned his reins towards the Abode of the Caliphate [Shahjahanabad] by way of Rupbas . . . [and camped in the vicinity of Akbarabad].

**[p. 237]** [On 9 Rabi' I 1067/26 December 1657] it came to the august notice that Agah Khan, the trustee (*mutawali*) of the Illumined Tomb and the Faujdar of the environs of Akbarabad had rolled up the carpet of existence. Having honored Girdhar Gaur with the grant of the mansab of 2,000 *zat* and 2,000 *suwar* and the post of the custodianship of the Akbarabad fort, and Mahram Khan with the trusteeship (*tauliyat*), they were permitted to depart.

# PART VI

# THE TAJ MAHAL IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPEAN SOURCES

167. Frontispiece to Johannes de Laet, *De Imperio Magni Mogolis*, Leiden, 1631.

# 39

# REFERENCES TO THE TAJ MAHAL BY SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPEAN TRAVELERS

[As mentioned in the Introduction, the European sources on the Taj Mahal are both sparse and generally unreliable. The most detailed and sympathetic description is that of Bernier, but as his first visit to Agra was in 1659, he was not a witness to the actual construction. Dated July 1663, his description was first set down as a letter, guiding the reader through the different parts of the monument, which he felt "deserves much more to be numbered among the wonders of the world than the pyramids of Egypt."

[Tavernier had visited Agra much earlier, in the winter of 1640-41, but as construction had begun nine years before this, in January 1632, his claim to have witnessed the tomb's "commencement" is patently false. His brief account, which apparently stems from a later visit in November 1665, includes the spurious claim--not corroborated in any other source--that "Shah Jahan began to build his own tomb on the other side of the river, but the war with his sons interrupted his plans."

[Manrique was briefly in Agra in January 1641, around the time of Tavernier's first visit. Although ambiguous, his description suggests that the walled enclosure and main marble mausoleum were complete, and that most of the workers were occupied in completing the water channels and landscaping the gardens. Some marble construction was still in progress--the Mughal sources indicate everything was virtually complete by February 1643--and Manrique records that he saw carts loaded with marble on the way to Bayana. Manrique's most preposterous statement is that the architect was the Venetian Geronimo Veroneo, who had died in 1640 in Lahore, shortly before Manrique's arrival, and who was subsequently buried in a modest grave in the Christian cemetery at Agra.

[The most important European source is Peter Mundy, an agent of the East India Company, who corroborates two important events related in the Mughal sources: Shah Jahan's return from Burhanpur in June 1631, shortly before the ceremony of the first death anniversary, or 'Urs, at the new grave site; and the installation, about one year later, of a gold railing surrounding the grave, at the time of the Second 'Urs. In addition, the evidence of Mundy tells us that the entire terrain around the site was being "leveled" so as not to "hinder the prospect" of the Tomb, near which, he also tells us, streets and shops were already being laid out for a new "city" called " Taj Ganj." Since Mundy left Agra for Surat on the 4th of March 1632 (N.S.), his mention of the gold railing suggests that it had been completed well before the Second 'Urs at the end of May. Among those who accompanied him on his departure for Surat was Geronimo Veroneo, whose absence from Agra at such a crucial time would suggest that he was not employed on the Tomb in any capacity.]

## 39.1. MUNDY

**[p. 212]** The Kinge is now buildinge a Sepulchre for his late deceased Queen Tage Moholl (Mumtaz Mahal) (as much to say att the brightness of the Moholl), whome hee dearely affected, haveing had by her 9 or 10 children, and thought in her life tyme to use noe other women (which is strange if true consideringe their libertie in that kinde). He intends it shall excell all other. The place appoynted [is] by the river side where shee is buried, brought from Brampore [Burhanpur] where shee dyed accompanyinge him in his warrs, as shee did all the tyme of his troubles.

There is alreadye about her Tombe a raile of gold. The buildinge is begun and goes on with excessive labour and cost, prosecuted with extraordinary dilligence, Gold and silver esteemed comon Metall, and Marble but as ordinarie stones. Hee intends, as some thinck, to remove all the Cittie hither, cawesinge hills to be made levell because they might not hinder the prospect of it, places appoynted for streets, shopps,

etts. dwellings, commaunding Merchants, shoppkeepers, Artificers to Inhabit [it] where they begin to repaire and called by her name, Tage Gunge [Taj Ganj].

## 39.2. MANRIQUE, *ITINERARIO*, 1649

**[p. 350]** El otro Mausoleo, obra, como tengo dicho, del Emperador Corrombo [Shah Jahan], dedicado a la infelice memoria de su principal, y querida esposa Begoma, està azia a la otra punta de la Ciudad; que por entonces no estar aun acabado, y le faltar mucha parte, segun la traça que lleuaua, y se platicaua, no tratarè mas que de aquello que estaua hecho; que era vna hermosa, grandissima, y quadrada muralha de rubicunda, y famos canteria, y de proporcionada altura; a la qual por remate en lugar de alamenas la ornan y reparan gruessos, y fuertes espigones de la misma piedra. En los quartro cantones desta gran muralla se leuantauan otros tantos Palacios fabricados de grandes, hermosos, y blanquissimos marmoles, que demàs de quarenta leguas se trayan alli para aquellas fabricas: y algunos, que encontrè en el camino, que hize a la Ciudad de Bianà, eran de tan extraordinaria grandeza, y largura, que dauan bien que sudar a muchas juntas, ansi de fuertes, y pigros Bueyes, como de ferozes, y cornigeros Bufalos, que en hileras de veinte y treinta juntas mouian vnas fuertes, y disformes carretas.

Encerraua esta gran muralla vn grãdissimo y quadrado campo en **[p. 351]** medio del qual se leuantaua vna grande, excelsa, y circular Torre, de cuyo medio saliendo con lineas el famoso Geometra, hizo a menos costa que el Siracusano Archimedes su perfecta circunferencia. Es tambien esta Torre de blancos, y luzidos marmoles.

En ella, y en las demas obras trabajauan de ordinario mil personas entre maestros, officiales, y obreros, ocupandose tambien mucha parte destos, vnos en disponer curiosos jardines, otros en plantaren opacos bosques, y ordenadas alamedas; otros finalmente en hazeren caminos, y receptaculos pera los liquidos cristales; pues sin ellos era impossible permanece en sus trabajos.

El arhiteto destas fabricas fue vn Veneciano por nombre Geronimo Veroneo, que passo a aquellas partes en las naues de Portugal, y murio en la Ciudad de Laòr poco tiempo antes de mi llegada.

A este daua el Corrombo Emperador grandes salarios: mas supose aprouechar tan mal dellos, que quando murio, dizen que le hallara el Padre Joseph de Castro de la Compañia, y de nacion Lombardo, muy menos de lo que se imaginaua. Deste auia esparcido la fama velocissima reparratriz de buenas, y malas nueuas, que mandandole llamar el Padchà, y manifestandole el deseo, que tenia de que se edificasse vn grandioso, y sumptuoso mausoleo à su defunta consorte, y que para esto hiziesse algunos dibuxos, que le mostrasse:

Obedecio el Veroneo Architecto este mandato, y mostrò dentro de pocos dias en varios modelos de bellissima architectura toda la pericia del arte que sabia:

Con lo que auiendo contentado à aquella Magestad en esto, le descontentò segun su barbara, y arrogante soberauia, en los limitados precios, que dezia: y ansi dizen, que enfadado le mandara que expendiesse *tres crouràs* de rupias, que son trezientas leckas, y que gastados le auisasse: summa tan grande de moneda, que admira. Mas si las sepulcrales estancias, como dezian, auian de ser cubiertas de laminas de oro, como lo era la vrna, adonde estauan ya puestos los guessos de la Agarena Emperatriz, no serà cosa de espanto tan excessiuos gastos, maxime al que por solito a gastar sus limitados escudos, despues de gastar primero largas horas en varias consideraciones, viendo que en tan breue distancia, como la que sy de vn abrir, y cerrar de boca, se mandan gastar quinze millones que pesos Españoles, que se montan en las tres crouras nombradas arriba:

Y para mas declaracion del curioso Lector, sabrà que vna crourà son cien leckas, y vna lecka cien mil rupiàs, y vna rupia medio peso Español.

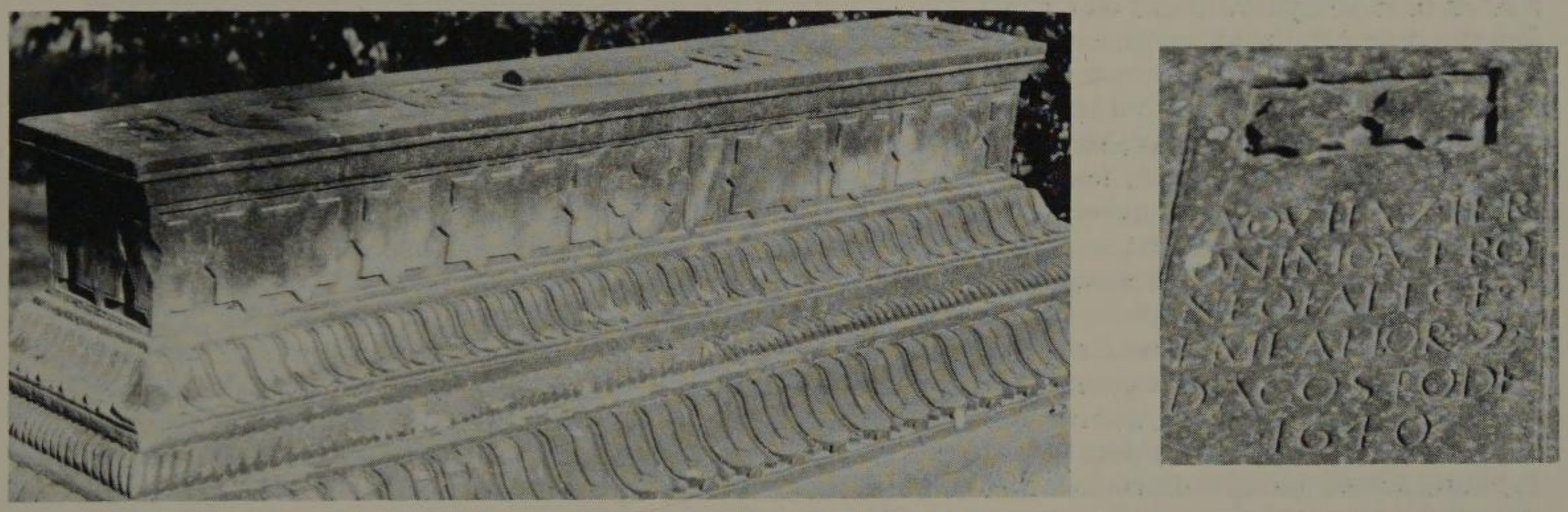
**[pp. 171-74]** The other Mausoleum, the work, as I remarked, of the Emperor Corrombo [Shah Jahan], dedicated to the unhappy memory of his chief and most beloved wife and Begoma, stands at the opposite end of the town. At this time it was still incomplete, the greater part of it remaining to be done, according to the plan drawn up and what was discussed, and I will therefore only deal with so much of it as was then finished. This consisted of a handsome, lofty, quadrangular wall of hewn stone of a reddish hue, the wall well proportioned as to height. The summit of the wall is crowned with strong spikes made of the same stone, instead of the usual

battlements. At the four corners of the great wall stood four Palaces, built of great handsome blocks of white marble, which had been brought there from over forty leagues away, for the erection of these edifices. Some of these blocks, which I met on the way, when visiting Biana City, were of such unusual size and length that they drew the sweat of many powerful teams of oxen and of fierce-looking, big-horned buffaloes, which were dragging enormous, strongly made wagons, in teams of twenty or thirty animals.

This great wall embraced a huge square-shaped enclosure, in the center of which rose a vast, lofty, circular structure, from the middle of which this famous Geometer, by drawing equal lines, constructed a perfect circle with less trouble than Archimedes of Syracuse. This circular building is, moreover, made of glittering white marble.

On this building, as well as other works, a thousand men were usually engaged, overseers, officials, and workmen. Of these many were occupied in laying out ingenious gardens, others planting shady groves and ornamental avenues, while the rest were marking roads and those receptacles for the crystal waters, without which their labor could not be carried out.

The architect of these works was a Venetian, by name Geronimo Veroneo, who had come to this part in a Portugese ship and died in the City of Laor [Lahore] just before I reached it.



168. Agra, Christian cemetery, grave of Geronimo Veroneo, dated 1640.

The Emperor Corrombo paid him a very high salary, but he is said to have been so careless in money matters that when he died Father Joseph de Castro, a Lombardy man of the Society of Jesus, found far less than was expected. Fame, the swift conveyer of good and evil news, had spread the story that the Emperor summoned him and informed him that he desired to erect a great and sumptuous tomb to his dead wife, and he was required to draw up some designs for this, for the Emperor's inspection.

The architect Veroneo carried out this order, and within a few days proved the great skill he had in his art by producing several models of the most beautiful architecture.

He pleased this Ruler in respect of the designs, but, in his barbaric pride and arrogance, His Majesty was displeased with him owing to his low estimates, and it is said that, becoming angry, he told Veroneo to spend three crores of rupees, that is three hundred lakhs, and to inform him when it was expended. This is so large a sum as to overawe one. If, however, as they used to say, the tombs had to be covered with gold plates, as had been done with the funeral urn which already held the remains of this Agarene Empress, such heavy expenditure was not surprising. But he will be astounded, who is wont to expend his few crowns after passing long hours in sundry considerations, when he appreciates that in as little time as it takes to open and shut one's mouth, orders were given for the expenditure of fifteen millions of Spanish pesos, which equals the three crores referred to above.

And to enlighten the curious Reader still further, I would have him know that a crore is one hundred lakhs, and one lakh one hundred thousand rupees, and one rupee half a Spanish peso.

## 1.3. BERNIER, *VOYAGES*, 1670

**[pp. 89-96]** Finissons [cette lettre de 1 juillet 1663] par ces deux merveilleux Mausolées qui donnnent tant d'avantage a la ville d'Agra sur celle de Dehli. Jehan-Guire fit bâtir le premier pour honorer la memoire de son pere Akbar; & Chah-Jehan fit batir le second pour honorer celle de Taje-Mehale sa femme, cette extraordinaire & fameuse beaute dont il fut tellement passionné, qu'on dit que tant qu'elle vécut il n'en vit jamais d'autre, & que quand elle mourut il en pensa mourir lui-même. Je ne m'arreterai pas à vous parler de celui d'Akber, parce que tout ce qu'il y a de beaute se trouve avec beaucoup plus d'avantage dans celui de Taje-Mehale, que je m'en vais tâcher de vous decrire. Representez vous donc qu'au fortir de la ville d'Agra, tirant vers l'Orient, vous entrez dans une longue & large ruë pavée, qui va doucement en montant, & qui a d'une côté une haute & longue muraille, qui fait le cote d'un jardin quarré beaucoup plus grand que notre Place Royale, & de l'autre une file de maisons neuves à arcades, telles que sont celles de ces principales ruës de Dehli dont j'ai parlé. Quand on a fait la longueur de la moitie de la muraille, on trouve à la droite du cote des maisons une grande porte assez bien faite, qui donne entrée dans un Karvan-Serrah, & à l'oposite du cote de la muraille, une porte magnifique d'un grand pavillon quarré, qui donne entree dans le jardin entre deux reservoirs revetus de pierre de taille.

Ce pavillon est plus long que large, & est bâti du'une pierre que est comme du marbre rouge, mais elle n'en a pas la dureté. La façade me semble etre beaucoup plus magnifique en sa façon, plus longue, & autant élevée que celle de Saint Louis de notre ruë Saint Antoine. Veritablement on ne voit pas la des colomnes, des architraves & des corniches taillées dans la proportion de ces cinq ordres d'Architecture qu'on observe si religieufement dans nos Palais, c'est une espece de batiment differente & particuliere, mais qui ne laisse pas d'avoir de l'agreable dans sa bizarre dispofition, & qui, à mon avis, meriteroit bien sa place dans nos Livres d'Architecture. Ce n'est presque qu'arcades sur arcades, & que galeries ou divans sur galeries, disposées & pratiquées de cent façons differentes, & cependant rout paroit magnifique, assez bien entendu & bien conduit, & rien n'y choque la veuë, au contraire tout y rit, & on ne peut se rassasier de la regarder. La derniere fois que je la vis fut avec un de nos Marchands François, qui ne pouvoit aussi bien que moi se lasser de la regarder; jen'osois lui en dire mon sentiment, apprehendant de m'être corrompu le goût & me l'être fait a l'Indienne; mais comme il revenoit fraichement de France, je tus bien aise de lui entendre dire qu'il n'avoit jamais rien vu de si auguste ni de si hardi dans l'Europe.

Après qu'on est entré quelques pas dans le pavillon pour passer au jardin, on se trouve dessous une haute voute en rond ou en calote, qui a par le haut des galeries tout autour, & par le bas a droit & à gauche deux divans ou estrades relevées de terre de huit ou dix pieds. A l'oposite de la porte c'est une grande arcade toute ouverte, par où on entre sur une allée qui coupe presque tout le jardin en deux parties égales.

Cette allée est en terrasse large a passer six carosses de front, pavée de grands carreaux de pierre dure, élevée de quel-ques huit pieds au desous du jardin, & divisée par le milieu d'un canal, revétu de pierre de taille avec des jets d'eau de distance en distance.

Apres qu'on a fait vingt-cinq ou trente pas sur cette allée, si l'on tourne le visage pour regarder l'entrée, on voit l'autre façade du pavilion, qui n'est veritablement pas à comparer avec celle qui regarde sur la ruë, mais qui ne laisse pas encore d'etre magnifique, étant haute, élevée & d'une Architecture approchante de l'autre; & des deux cotez, du pavillon, le long de la muraille du jardin, on voit une longue & profonde galerie en terrasse soûtenuë par quantité de colomnes basses & proches les unes des autres; & c'est dans cette galerie que pendant la saison des pluyes on fait entrer les pauvres qui viennent a trois fois la semaine pour recevoir l'aumône d'une fondation que Chah-Jehan y a faite à perpetuité.

Avançant ensuite le long de l'allée, on decouvre de loin devant soi un grand dôme, où est la sepulture, ou on voit en bas à droit & à gauche diverses allees de jardin couvertes d'arbres, & divers parterres couverts de fleurs.

Du bout de cette allee, outre ce domme qu'on a devant soi, on découvre a droit & a gauche deux grands pavillons qui sont bâtis de memes pierres, & qui paroissent par consequent tous rouges comme le premier. Ce font de grands & spacieux édifices quarrez, faits en terrasie, ouverts de trois arcades, & ayant au fond la muraille du jardin, enforte qu'on marche par dessous comme fi c'étoient de hautes & larges galeries. Je ne m'arreterai pas à vous faire considerer les ornemens du dedans de ces pavillons, parce qu'au regard de leurs murailles, du platfond & du pavé, ils ne sont guére dissemblables du dôme que je m'en vais vous dépeindre, après que je vous aurai fait remarquer qu'entre le bout de l'allée dont nous avons parlé, & le dôme, il y a un espace de plein pied assez large, que j'apelle un Parterre d'eau, en ce que les pierres taillées & figurées en plusieurs façons, sur lefquel-les on marche, y tiennent lieu des buys de nos parterres, & c'est du milieu de ce parterre qu'on peut voir à son aise une partie de ce bâtiment, ou est le sepulture qui nous reste à confiderer.

C'est un grand & vaste dôme de marbre blanc, qui s'éleve à peu près de la hauteur de celui de notre Val de Grace de Paris, & qui est entouré de quantité de tourelles de même matiere qui décedent par degrés. Quatre grandes arcades soutiennent toute la machine, dont trois sont entierement à jour, la quatrième est fermée de la muraille du'une falle, accompagnée d'une galerie, où des Mullahs entretenus lisent incessamment l'Alcoran avec un profond respect en l'honneur de Taje-Mehalle. Le centre des arcades est enrichi de tables de marbre blanc, où l'on voit entaillez de grands caracteres Arabes de marbre noir, qui sont un très-bel effet a la veuë. L'interieur ou partie concave du dome, & tout le mur generalement depuis le haut jusques en bas, est couvert de marbre blanc; il n'y a endroit qui ne soit travaillé avec art & qui n'ait sa beauté particuliere. L'on ne voit par tout que Jachen ou Jad, que de ces sortes de pierres dont on enrichit les murailles de la Chapelle du Grand Duc à Florence, que Jaspe, & que plusieurs autres especes de pierres rares & de prix, mises en ceuvre en cent façons, mêlées & enchassées dans les marbres qui couvrent le corps du mur. Les quarreaux de marbre blanc & noir, & qui sont le pavé, en font meme rehaussées avec toute la delicatesse & galanterie imaginable.

Sous ce dome est une petite chambre qui renferme la sepulture; je ne l'ai pas vuë par le dedans, parce qu'on ne l'ouvre qu'une fois l'année avec grande ceremonie, & qu'on n'y laisse entrer aucun Chrétien, de peur, disent-ils, de profaner la saintete du lieu; mais à ce que j'ai pu comprendre de ce que l'on m'en a dit, il n'est rien de plus riche ni de plus magnifique.

Il ne me reste plus qu'à vous faire prenadre garde a une allée en terrasse de vingt on vingt-cinq pas ordinaires de largeur & davantage de hauteur, qui est entre le dôme & l'extremité du Jardin, d'où l'on voit en bas la riviere du Gemma qui passe au pied, une grande campagne de jardins, une partie de la ville d'Agra, la Forteresse & toutes ces belles maisons d'Omerahs qui font bâties le long de l'eau: Il ne me reste plus, dis-je, qu'à vous faire prendre garde a cette terrasse qui cient presque toute la longueur d'un côté de jardin, & vous prier apres cela de juger si j'ai du raison de dire que le Mausolee de Taje-Mahalle est quelque chose de merveilleux. Pour moi, je'ne sais pas bien encore fi je n'aurois point le gout un peu trop Indien, mais je crois qu'on le devroit plûtôt mettre au nombre des merveilles du monde que ces masses informes de Pyramides d'Egypte que je me lassai de voir des la seconde fois qu'on m'y mena, & où je ne trouve par le dehors que des monceaux de grandes pierres arrangées en degrez les unes sur les autres, & par le dedans que très-peu d'art & d'invention.

**[pp. 293-299]** I shall finish this letter [of 1 July 1663] with a description of the two wonderful mausoleums which constitute the chief superiority of Agra over Delhi. One was erected by Jehan-Guyre [Jahangir] in honor of his father Ekbar [Akbar]; and Chah-Jehan [Shah Jahan] raised the other to the memory of his wife Tage Mehale [Mumtaz Mahal], that extraordinary and celebrated beauty, of whom her husband was so enamored that it is said he was constant to her during life, and at her death was so affected as nearly to follow her to the grave.

I shall pass Ekbar's monument without further observation, because all its beauties are found in still greater perfection in that of Tage Mehale, which I shall now endeavor to describe.

On leaving Agra, toward the east, you enter a long, wide, or paved street, on a gentle ascent, having on one side a high and long wall, which forms the side of a square garden, of much greater extent than our Place Royale, and on the other side a row of new houses with arcades, resembling those of the principal streets in Delhi, which I have already described. After walking half the length of the wall, you find on the right, that is, on the side of the houses, a large gate, tolerably well made, which is the entrance of a Karvan-Serrah [caravansarai] and on the opposite side from that of the wall is seen the magnificent gate of a spacious and square pavilion, forming the entrance into the garden, between two reservoirs, faced with hewn stone.

This pavilion is an oblong square, and built of a stone resembling red marble, but not so hard. The front seems to me longer, and much more grand in its construction, than that of S. Louis, in the rue S. Antoine, and it is equally lofty. The columns, the architraves and the cornices are, indeed, not formed according to the proportion of the five orders of architecture so strictly observed in French edifices. The building I am speaking of is of a different and peculiar kind; but not without something pleasing in its whimsical structure; and in my opinion it well deserves a place in our books of architecture. It consists almost wholly of arches upon arches, and galleries upon galleries, disposed and contrived in a hundred different ways. Nevertheless the edifice has a magnificent appearance, and is conceived and executed effectually. Nothing offends the eye; on the contrary, it is delighted with every part, and never tired with looking.

The last time I visited Tage Mehale's mausoleum I was in the company of a French merchant, who, as well as myself, thought that this extraordinary fabric could not be sufficiently admired. I did not venture to express my opinion, fearing that my taste might have become corrupted by my long residence in the Indies; and as my companion was come recently from France, it was quite a relief to my mind to hear him say that he had seen nothing in Europe so bold and majestic.

When you have entered a little way into the pavilion approaching toward the garden, you find yourself under a lofty cupola, surrounded above with galleries, and having two divans or platforms below, one on the right, the other on the left, both of them raised eight or ten French feet from the ground. Opposite to the entrance from the street is a large open arch, by which you enter a walk which divides nearly the whole of the garden into two equal parts.

This walk or terrace is wide enough to admit six coaches abreast; it is paved with large and hard square stones, raised about eight French feet above the garden; and divided the whole length by a canal faced with hewn stone and ornamented with fountains placed at certain intervals.

After advancing twenty-five or thirty paces on this terrace, it is worthwhile to turn around and view the back elevation of the pavilion, which, though not comparable to the front, is still very splendid, being lofty and of a similar style of architecture. On both sides of the pavilion, along the garden wall, is a long and wide gallery, raised like a terrace, and supported by a number of low columns placed near each other. Into

this gallery the poor are admitted three times a week during the rainy season to receive the alms founded in perpetuity by Chah-Jehan.

Resuming the walk along the main terrace, you see before you at a distance a large dome, in which is the sepulchre, and to the right and left of that dome on a lower surface you observe several garden walks covered with trees and many parterres full of flowers.

When at the end of the principal walk or terrace, besides the dome that faces you, are discoverd two large pavilions, one to the right, another to the left, both built with the same kind of stone, consequently of the same red color as the first pavilion. These are spacious square edifices, the parts of which are raised over each other in the form of balconies and terraces; these arches leave openings which have the garden wall for a boundary, and you walk under these pavilions as if they were lofty and wide galleries. I shall not stop to speak of the interior ornaments of the two pavilions, because they scarcely differ in regard to the walls, ceiling, or pavement from the dome which I am going to describe. Betwen the end of the principal walk and the dome is an open and pretty large space, which I call a water-parterre, because the stones on which you walk, cut and figured in various forms, represent the borders of box in our parterres. From the middle of this space you have a good view of the building which contains the tomb, and which we are now to examine.

This building is a vast dome of white marble nearly of the same height as the Val de Grace of Paris, and encircled by a number of turrets, also of white marble, descending the one below the other in regular succession. The whole fabric is supported by four great arches, three of which are quite open and the other closed up by the wall of an apartment with a gallery attached to it. There the Koran is continually read with apparent devotion in respectful memory of Tage Mehale by certain Mullahs kept in the mausoleum for that purpose. The center of every arch is adorned with white marble slabs whereon are inscribed large Arabian characters in black marble, which produce a fine effect. The interior or concave part of the dome and generally the whole of the wall from top to bottom are faced with white marble: no part can be found that is not skilfully wrought, or that has not its peculiar beauty. Everywhere are seen the jasper, and jachen, or jade, as well as other stones similar to those that enrich the walls of the Grand Duke's chapel at Florence, and several more of great value and rarity, set in an endless variety of modes, moxed and enchased in the slabs of marble which face the body of the wall. Even the squares of white and black marble which compose the pavement are inlaid with these precious stones in the most beautiful and delicate manner imaginable.

Under the dome is a small chamber, wherein is enclosed the tomb of Tage Mehale. It is opened with much ceremony once in a year, and once only; and as no Christian is admitted within, lest its sanctity should be profaned, I have not seen the interior, but I understand that nothing can be conceived more rich and magnificent.

It only remains to draw your attention to a walk or terrace, nearly five-and-twenty paces in breadth and rather more in height, which runs from the dome to the extremity of the garden. From this terrace are seen the Gemna [Jumna] flowing below, a large expanse of luxuriant gardens, a part of the city of Agra, the fortress, and all the fine residences of the Omrahs [umaras] erected on the banks of the river. When I add that this terrace extends almost the whole length of one side of the

garden, I leave you to judge whether I had not sufficient ground for asserting that the mausoleum of Tage Mehale is an astonishing work. It is possible I may have imbibed an Indian taste; but I decidedly think that this monument deserves much more to be numbered among the wonders of the world than the pyramids of Egypt, those unshapen masses which when I had seen them twice yielded me no satisfaction, and which are nothing on the outside but heaps of large stones piled in the form of steps one upon another, while within there is very little that is creditable either to human skill or to human intervention.

## 1.4. TAVERNIER, *LES SIX VOYAGES*, 1676

**[II, pp. 93-94]** De toutes les sepultures qu'on voit à Agra celle de la femme de Cha-gehan est la plus superbe. Il la fit faire expres proche du *Tasimacan* où abordent tous les etrangers; afin que tout le monde la vît & admirat sa magnificence. Le Tasimacan est un grand Bazar compose de six grandes courts toutes entoures de portiques, fous lesquels il y a des chambres pour la demeure des Marchands, il s'y fait debit d'une prodigieuse quantité de toiles.

La sepulture de cette Begum on Sultane Reine est au Levant de la Ville le long de la riviere dans une grande place fermée de murailles, sur lesquelles regne une petite galerie comme sur les murailles de plusieurs villes d'Europe. Cette place est une maniere de jardin faite par compartimens comme nos parterres; mais au lieu que nous y mettons du sable, ce n'est-là que du marbre blanc & noir. On entre dans cette place par un grand portail, & d'abord on voir à main gauche une belle galerie qui regarde la Mecque, où il y a trois ou quatre niches ou le Moufti se vient tendre aux heures acoûtumées pour faire la priere. Un peu plus avant que le milieu de la place du côté de l'eau, on voit élevées l'une sur l'autre trois grandes plate-formes, avec quatre tours aux quatre coins de chacune, & l'escalier en dedans pour crier à l'heure de la priere. Il y au dessus un dôme qui n'est guere moins superbe que celui du Val-de-Grace a Paris. Il est revêtu dedans & dehors de marbre blanc, le milieu etant de brique. Sur ce dôme il y a un tombeau vuide; car la Begum est enterrée sous une voute qui est au-dessous de la premiere plate-forme. Les mêmes changemens qui se sont au bas dans ce lieu souterrain, se sont en haut autour du tombeau; car de temps en temps on change de tapis, de chandeliers, & d'autres ornements de cette nature; & il y a toûjours-là quelques Moullahs pour prier.

J'ai vû commencer & achever ce grand ou ouvrage, auquel on a employé vingt-deux ans & vingt mille hommes qui travailloient incessamment, ce qui peut faire juger que la dépense en a été excessive. On tient que les seuls echasaudages ont plus couté que l'ouvrage entier, parce que manquant de bois on a été contraine de les faire de brique, de même que les cintres des voutes, ce qui a demandé un grand travail & de grands frais. Cha-gehan avoit commence de faire sa sepulture de l'autre cote de la riviere; mais la guerre qu'il eut avec ses fils rompit ce dessein, & Aureng-zeb qui regne presentement ne s'est pas soucié de l'achever. Un Eunuque qui commande deux mille hommes est commis pour la garde, tant de la sepulture de la Begum, que du Tasimacan dont elle est proche.

**[II, pp. 89-91]** As for the tombs in Agra and its environs, there are some which are very beautiful, and every eunuch in the Emperor's harem is ambitious to have as magnificent a tomb built for himself. When they have amassed large sums they earnestly desire to go to Mecca, and take with them rich presents; but the Great Mogul, who does not wish the money to leave his country, very seldom grants them permission, and consequently, not knowing what to do with their wealth, they expend the greater part of it in these burying-places, and thus leave some memorial.

Of all the tombs at Agra, that of the wife of Shahjahan is the most splendid. He purposely made it near the Tasimacan, where all foreigners come, so that the whole world should see and admire its magnificence. The Tasimacan [Taj-i-Makan] is a large bazar, consisting of six large courts all surrounded with porticoes, under which

are chambers for the use of merchants, and an enormous quantity of cottons are sold there.

The tomb of the Begam, or sultan queen, is at the east end of the town by the side of the river in a large square surrounded by walls, upon which there is a small gallery, as on the walls of many towns in Europe. This square is a kind of garden divided into compartments like our parterres, but in the places where we put gravel there is white and black marble. You enter this square by a large gate, and at first you see, on the left hand, a beautiful gallery which faces in the direction of Mecca, where there are three or four niches where the Moufti comes at fixed times to pray. A little farther than the middle of the square, on the side of the water, you see three great platforms raised one upon the other, with towers at the four corners of each, and a staircase inside, for proclaiming the hour of prayer. There is a dome above, which is scarcely less magnificent than that of the Val de Grace in Paris. It is covered within and without with white marble, the center being of brick. Under this dome there is an empty tomb, for the Begam is interred under a vault beneath the first platform. The same changes which are made below in this subterranean place are made above the tomb, for from time to time they change the carpet, chandeliers, and other ornaments of that kind, and there are always there some Mollahs to pray.

I witnessed the commencement and accomplishment of this great work, on which twenty-two years have been spent, during which twenty thousand men worked incessantly; this is sufficient to enable one to realize that the cost of it has been enormous. It is said that the scaffoldings alone cost more than the entire work, because, from want of wood, they, as well as the supports of the arches, had all to be made of brick; this has entailed much labor and heavy expenditure. Shahjahan began to build his own tomb on the other side of the river, but the war with his sons interrupted his plan, and Aurangzeb, who reigns at present, is not disposed to complete it. A eunuch in command of 2,000 men guards both the tomb of the Begam and the Tasimacan, to which it is near at hand.

### 39.5. MANUCCI, *STORIA DO MOGOR*, CA. 1700

**[p. 176]** Shahjahan gave orders for the construction of the mausoleum [of Mumtaz Mahal] opposite the royal palace at Agrah with great expenditure. It is in two stories, in the lower being deposited the body of his beloved wife. No one may see this sepulchre, for it is in the charge of women and eunuchs.

### 39.6. THEVENOT, *VOYAGES*, 1684

**[p. 48]** King Gehanguir caused one to be built for King Ecbar his Father, upon an eminence of the Town. It surpasses in magnificence all those of the Grand Signoirs, but the fairest of all, is that which Cha-Gehan Erected in honour of one of his Wives called Tadge-Mehal, whom he tenderly loved, and whose death had almost cost him his life. I know that the Learned and curious Mr. Bernier hath taken memoires of it, and therefore I did not take the pains to be exactly informed of that work. Only so

much I'll say that this King having sent for all the able Architects of the Indies to Agra, he appointed a Council of them for contriving and perfecting the Tomb which he intended to Erect, and having setled Salaries upon them, he ordered them to spare no cost in making the finest Mausoleum in the World, if they could. They completed it after their manner, and succeeded to his satisfaction.

The stately Garden into which all the parts of that Mausoleum are distributed, the great Pavillions with their Fronts, the beautiful Porches, the lofty dome that covers the Tomb, the lovely disposition of its Pillars, the raising of Arches which support a great many Galleries, Quiochques and Terrasses, make it apparent enough that the Indians are not ignorant in Architecture. It is true, the manner of it seems odd to Europeans; yet it hath its excellency, and though it be not like that of the Greeks and other Ancients, yet the Fabrick may be said to be very lovely. The Indians say that it was twenty years in building, that as many Men as could labour in the great work were employed, and that it was never interrupted during that long space of time.

# 40

# EUROPEAN REFERENCES TO THE CHARACTER OF SHAH JAHAN AND MUMTAZ MAHAL

[As mentioned in the Introduction, a selection of European sources has been included here, which have a bearing, direct or indirect, on the problem of what might be called the "myth" of the Taj Mahal--namely the romantic interpretation of the tomb as a noble embodiment of the unparalleled marital devotion of its builder, a monument to undying love. In contrast to the unqualified praise of Shah Jahan contained in the court histories, several European sources cast serious aspersions upon his moral character, with some alleging that he indulged his sexual appetites to such an extent that, in the words of Manucci, it seemed "as if the only thing Shah Jahan cared for was the search for women to serve his pleasure."

[Most of the European criticisms--whether of Shah Jahan, Mumtaz Mahal or Jahanara--are clearly based upon hearsay and gossip. The reliability of the criticisms is of course highly suspect, but perhaps not more so than the excessive flattery of the court histories. Without saying so in so many words, the histories imply that Shah Jahan's devotion to his dead wife was his sole motive in building her tomb. Whether they are accurate or not, the European criticisms force us to reconsider the popular romantic explanation. Both Mughal and European, favorable and unfavorable, sources are included here, in an attempt to make the scope of the anthology as inclusive, and as thought-provoking, as possible.]

## REFERENCES TO MUMTAZ MAHAL

### 40.1. MANUCCI

**[I, pp. 175-76]** Finding himself undisputed King of Hindustan, Shah Jahan was compelled to make war against the Portuguese of Hugli, for this was demanded by Taj Mahal, from whom the Portugese had carried off two slave girls. He sent against them the general Qasim Khan, who, when he arrived close to Hugli, made an arrangement with the Portuguese. These paid a large sum of money; whereupon he retired the distance of a day's journey, but again advanced toward Hugli, with the excuse that the King had ordered him to take the place.

They defended themselves as long as they could, but, unable to continue longer, they surrendered. Qasim Khan seized by lot 5,000 souls, among them some Augustinian and Jesuit fathers. It seemed as if God desired to chastise the Portugese of Hugli, seeing that they were unable to escape with their ships by way of the river Ganges, on the banks of which the town referred to stands.

The water in the river had fallen, and the boats lay stranded, a thing that had nevere happened before or since. . . . Qasim Khan carried off the prisoners to court, but God willed that before they arrived there, the queen, Taj Mahal, should die. . . .

**[p. 177]** There cannot be the least doubt that if the Portugese had reached the court in the lifetime of Taj Mahal, she would have ordered the whole of them to be cut into pieces after great tortures, for thus had she sworn when they did her the injury. All the same, they did not escape a sufficient amount of suffering; some abjured their faith, either from fear of torture and of death, or through the desire of recovering their wives, who had been distributed by Shah Jahan among his officers.

Others, the most beautiful among them, were kept for the royal palace. Of some of these, I shall have something to say further on.

The fathers were more tenacious in holding to the Christian faith, saying that they adored a Master who could preserve them, nor for anything that Shah Jahan might do, would they become renegades. There were also a few others, laymen, who held fast to their faith, but were released through the petitions of some persons at court, chiefly of an Armenian, who was a great favorite, or through the money paid by a Venetian, my compatriot, called Hieronomo Veroneo, a man ransomed by the Portuguese. These released prisoners lived in the city of Agrah, and until this day there are some of their descendants.

*Shah Jahan's Devotion to Mumtaz Mahal*

40.2. MUNDY

**[p. 212]** The Kinge...dearely affected [Mumtaz Mahal], having had by her 9 or 10 children, and thought in her life tyme to use noe other women (which is strange if true considering their libertie in that kinde).

40.3. BERNIER

**[p. 11]** . . . and Chah-Jehan [Shah Jahan] raised the other [tomb] to the memory of his wife Tage Mahale [Mumtaz Mahal], that extraordinary beauty, of whom her husband was so enamored that it is said he was constant to her during life, and at her death was so affected as nearly to follow her to the grave.

. . . It is usual in this country to give similar names to the members of the reigning family. Thus the wife of Chah-Jehan--so renowned for her beauty, and whose splendid mausoleum is more worthy of a place among the wonders of the world than the unshapen masses and heaps of stones in Egypt--was named Tage Mehalle, or the Crown of the Seraglio.

**REFERENCES TO THE MORAL CHARACTER OF SHAH JAHAN**

40.4. BERNIER

**[pp. 272-274]** A whimsical kind of fair is sometimes held during these festivities in the Mehale, or royal seraglio: it is conducted by the handsomest and most engaging of the wives of the Omrahs and principal Mausebdars. The articles exhibited are beautiful brocades, rich embroideries of the newest fashion, turbans elegantly worked on cloth of gold, fine muslins worn by women of quality, and other articles of high price. These bewitching females act the part of traders, while the purchasers are the King, the Begums or Princesses, and other distinguished ladies of the Seraglio. If any Omrah's wife happens to have a handsome daughter, she never fails to accompany her mother, that she may be seen by the King and become known to the Begums. The charm of this fair is the most ludicrous manner in which the King makes his bargains, frequently disputing for the value of a penny. He pretends that the good lady cannot possibly be in earnest, that the article is much too dear, that it is not equal to that he can find elsewhere, and that positively he will give no more than such

a price. The woman, on the other hand, endeavours to sell to the best advantage, and when the King perseveres in offering what she considers too little money, high words frequently ensue, and she fearlessly tells him that he is a worthless trader, a person ignorant of the value of merchandise; that her articles are too good for him, and that he had better go where he can suit himself better, and similar jocular expressions. The Begums betray, if possible, a still greater anxiety to be served cheaply; high words are heard on every side, and the loud and scurrilous quarrels of the sellers and buyers create a complete farce. But sooner or later they agree upon the price, the Princesses, as well as the King, buy right and left, pay in ready money, and often slip out of their hands, as if by accident, a few gold instead of silver roupies, intended as a compliment to the fair merchant or her pretty daughter. The present is received in the same unconscious manner, and the whole ends amidst witty jests and good-humour.

Chah-Jehan was fond of the sex and introduced fairs at every festival, though not always to the satisfaction of some of the Omrahs. He certainly transgressed the bounds of decency in admitting at those times into the seraglio singing and dancing girls called Kenchens (the gilded, the blooming), and in keeping them there for that purpose the whole night; they were not indeed the prostitutes seen in bazaars, but those of a more private and respectable class, who attend the grand weddings of Omrahs and Mansebdars, for the purpose of singing and dancing. Most of these Kenchens are handsome and well dressed, and sing to perfection; and their limbs being extremely supple, they dance with wonderful agility, and are always correct in regard to time; after all, however, they were but common women. It was not enough for Chah-Jehan that the Kenchens visited the fairs; when they came to him on the Wednesdays to pay their reverence at the Am-Kas, according to an ancient custom, he often detained them the whole night, and amused himself with their antics and follies. Aureng-Zebe is more serious than his father; he forbids the Kenchens to enter the seraglio; but, complying with long established usage, does not object to their coming every Wednesday to the Am-Kas, where they make the salam from a certain distance, and then immediately retire.

### 40.5. TAVERNIER

**[I, pp. 260-62]** The revolutions which took place in the Empire of the Great Mogul on account of the supposed death of Shah Jahan are full of so many important and memorable incidents, that they deserve to be known throughout the whole world. This great monarch reigned for more than forty years, less as an Emperor over his subjects than as a father over his house and children; to such an extent was this the case that, during his reign, the police system was so strict in all things, that there was never any necessity to execute a man for having committed theft.

In his old age, he committed an indiscretion; and moreover, used some drugs of so stringent a character that they brought on a malady which nearly sent him to the grave. This necessitated his shutting himself up for two or three months in his harem with his women, and during that time he showed himself to his people but rarely, and at long intervals; this caused them to believe that he was dead. For custom requires these Kings to show themselves in public three times every week, or, at the very least, every fifteen days. . . .

Shah Jahan having fallen sick, retired into the women's quarter without showing himself for many days. So the rumor spread that he was dead, and that Dara Shikoh concealed his death in order to arrange his affairs and secure for himself the whole of the Empire. It is certain that the Emperor, believing that he was about to die and was near his last hour, ordered Dara Shikoh to assemble all the Omrahs or nobles of the Empire, and seat himself on the throne, which belonged to him as the eldest of all the brothers. . . .

At this conversation with his son, Dara Shikoh, who honored his father greatly and loved him tenderly, replied that he prayed to God for the life of His Majesty, which he hoped would be long, and that while God preserved it he would never dream of ascending the throne, but would consider himself always happy in being his subject. Indeed, the Prince did not absent himself for a moment from the presence of his father, so that he might be at hand to attend upon him during his sickness; and, wishing to be present at all times, he slept at night close to the Emperor's bed on a carpet spread on the floor.

However, upon the false report of the death of Shah Jahan, his three other sons straightway stirred themselves, and each laid claim to their father's throne.

### 40.6. MANUCCI

**[I, p. 182]** Before speaking of the wars waged by Shah Jahan and of his downfall, it is necessary to say something of his disposition. Although warlike, as he showed by his rising against his father, he was at the same time fond of music and dancing to such a degree, more or less, as his father Jahangir. His usual diversion was to listen to various instruments, to verses and poetry; and he was very fond of musicians, especially of one who was not only a graceful poet, but also a buffoon.

**[p. 186]** All the world knows that the Mahomedan, following the example of their master Muhammad, are very licentious; wherefore there are men among them, some more and some less, chiefly the nobles and the kings, who do not content themselves with a few wives, but seek for every method of gratifying themselves in this particular. It may be asserted that Shah Jahan was not superior to others in this respect, for, not contenting himself with the women that he had in his own palaces, he forfeited the respect of the nobles at his court by intrigues with their wives, whereby he came to his ruin and his death.

The chief of these women, one that he thought a great deal of, was the wife of Jafarcan [Ja'far Khan], and from the love he bore her, he wished to take her husband's life; but she saved him by praying that he might be sent as governor to Patana [Patna], as was done. In the same way, he had an acquaintance with the wife of Calican [Khalil Allah Khan] for some time, and this man took his revenge in the battle fought by Dara against Aurangzeb, as I shall relate further on.

**[p. 187]** The intimacy of Shah Jahan with the wives of Ja'far Khan and Khalil Allah Khan was so notorious that when they went to court, the mendicants called out in loud voices to Ja'far Khan's wife: "O breakfast of Shah Jahan! Remember us!" And when the wife of Khail Allah Khan went by, they shouted: "O luncheon of Shah Jahan! Succor us!" The women heard, and, without taking it as an insult, ordered alms to be given.

Shah Jahan did not spare the wife of his brother-in-law, Xaahish Can [Shayista Khan], though it was by a trick, for she would not consent. The procuress in this affair was Begom Saeb [Begam Sahib], the daughter of Shah Jahan, who, in compliance to her father, invited the said woman to a feast, at the end of which Shah Jahan violated her. The lady was so much affected that, going to her house, she would neither eat nor change her clothes, and in this manner ended her life in grief. Shayista Khan dissembled, hoping to have his revenge in due time, as will be seen farther on.

For the greater satisfaction of his lusts, Shah Jahan ordered the erection of a large hall, twenty cubits long and eight cubits wide, adorned throughout with great mirrors. The gold alone cost fifteen millions of rupees, not including the enamel work and precious stones, of which no account was kept. On the ceiling of the said hall, between one mirror and another, were strips of gold richly ornamented with jewels. At the corners of the mirrors hung great clusters of pearls, and the walls were of jasper stone. All this expenditure was made so that he might obscenely observe himself and his favorite women.

**[p. 188]** It would seem as if the only thing Shah Jahan cared for was the search for women to serve his pleasure. For this end he established a fair at his court, which lasted eight days every year. No one was allowed to enter except women of all ranks--that is to say, great and small, rich and poor, but all handsome. Each one brought what merchandise she could. But the best piece of goods she could produce was her own body. Their only object was that the king might fall in love with them; thus honorable women would not go to the place.

In those eight days, the king visited the stalls twice every day, seated on a small throne carried by several Tartar women, surrounded by several matrons, who walked with their sticks of enameled gold in their hands, and many eunuchs, all brokers for the subsequent bargaining; there were also a set of women musicians. Shah Jahan moves past with his attention fixed, and seeing any seller that attracted his fancy, he goes up to the stall, and making a polite speech, selects some of the things, and orders whatever she asks for them to be paid to her. Then the king gives an agreed-on signal, and having passed on, the matrons, well-versed in these matters, take care that they get her; and in due time, she is produced in the royal presence. Many of them come out of the palace very rich and satisfied, while others continue to dwell there with the dignity of concubines. These eight days were observed in the palace with great festivity, dancing, music, acting and other amusements. The fortress remained shut, with no man inside but the king. Once out of curiosity, the women were counted as they came out, and there were more than thirty thousand.

**[p. 189]** It is impossible to explain satisfactorily the passion that Shah Jahan had in this direction. Not satisfied with so many inventions for his own inordinate desires, he also permitted great liberty to public women [prostitutes], of whom the greater number were dancers and singers. All of them paid taxes to the king.

Among them is one caste called Cancheny [*kanchani*], who were under obligation to attend twice a week at court, for which they received pay, and to perform at a special place which the king had assigned to them. This class is more esteemed than others, by reason of their great beauty. When they go to court, to the number of

more than five hundred, they all ride in highly embellished vehicles, and are clothed in rich raiment. All of them appear and dance in the royal presence.

Once the king fell in love with one of them, retained her in his palace, and gave to her the title of concubine. Some of the nobles said to the king that a woman of that rank was unworthy of being placed in the royal palace. Shah Jahan replied: "*Matei nec her ducan que baxat*"--that is to say, "A good article may be from any shop."

Although Shah Jahan delighted in well-made women, he also required them to have good sense. Therefore, at different times, by different questions, he tested the understanding of every one of them. But it was a strange thing that happened to him with four servant women in his palace, who bore the names of the four quarters of the world. He rose at midnight to try the judgement of these four, and going into the room of each one, asked her if the dawn were near. The first replied, "No," giving as her reason **[p. 190]** that she still had the taste of betel in her mouth. The second also gave a negative answer, because the light of the candle in her room was still bright, whereas when dawn was approaching it no longer burnt so clearly. The third said that it was still a long time to daybreak, the reason being that when daylight was coming on, the pearls that she wore felt cold, whereas at that hour this was not so. The fourth, being a woman from the kingdom of Kashmir, where it is the habit of the women to speak freely, told Shah Jahan that the day would not be here so very soon, for when it was near she felt the call of nature to relieve her necessities, and at that moment her bowels gave her no such warning.

With these answers Shah Jahan retired, and when the next day arose, he gave to the first the office of looking after the betel that he ate; to the second charge of the royal lamps; to the third the care of the jewels and pearls; to the fourth, the supervision of the cleanliness of the royal retiring place.

. . . The lasciviousness of Shah Jahan did not interfere with his care to govern his kingdom most perfectly. He upheld the maxim of his father that true justice must be enforced, rewarding the meritorious and punishing the guilty. He kept his eye on his officials, punishing them rigorously when they fell short in their duty.

### *Shah Jahan's Attachment to Jahanara*

40.7. DE LAET, *DE IMPERIO MAGNI MOGOLIS*, 1631

**[p. 278]** Voluit hic monarcha post illa appelari Sultan-Scha-Bedin Mahumet. Et tot suorum coedibus addidit et incestum: nam dilectissima conjuge ipso coronationis suae die defuncta, sumsit sibi conjugem filiam suam e defuncta illa.

After those events this monarch wished to be known as Sultan Shihab al-Din Muhammad. And to so many murders of his relatives he added incest also; for, when his beloved wife had died on the very day of his coronation [*sic*], he took to himself as wife his own daughter by that dead woman.

40.8. BERNIER

**[pp. 11-12]** Begum-Saheb, the elder daughter of Chah-Jehan, was very handsome, of lively parts, and passionately beloved by her father. Rumour has it that his

rested on the decision of the Mullahs, or doctors of their law. According to them, it would have been unjust to deny the King the privilege of gathering fruit from the tree he had himself planted. Chah-Jehan reposed unbounded confidence in this his favourite child; she watched over his safety, and was so cautiously observant, that no dish was permitted to appear upon the royal table which had not been prepared under her superintendence. It is not surprising, therefore, that her ascendency in the court of the Mogol should have been nearly unlimited; that she should always have regulated the humours of her father, and exercised a powerful influence on the most weighty concerns. This Princess accumulated great riches by means of her large allowances, and of the costly presents which flowed in from all quarters, in consideration of numberless negotiations intrusted to her sole management.

40.9. MANUCCI

**[I, pp. 208-13]** The first daughter whom he had was Begom Saeb [Begam Sahib], the eldest of all, whom her father loved to an extraordinary degree, as most lovely, discreet, loving, generous, open-minded, and charitable. She was loved by all, and lived in state and magnificence. This princess had an annual income of three millions of rupees, in addition to the revenues of the port of Surat, assigned for her expenditure on betel. She had in addition many precious stones that had been given to her by her father. She favored the interests of her brother Dara, securing thus that the nobles at the court adopted the same side, and did not join that of his adversaries. She exerted herself a great deal to secure the crown to her brother Dara; this was due to her eagerness to marry, Dara having promised to give her consent as soon as he was crowned. With this end in view, she employed all her cleverness and energy to satisfy her father; she served him with the greatest love and diligence in order that Shah Jahan should accede to her petitions.

It was from this cause that the common people hinted that she had intercourse with her father, and this has given occasion to Monsieur Bernier to write many things about this princess, founded entirely on the talk of low people. Therefore it is incumbent on me, begging his pardon, to say that what he writes is untrue.

He says that Shah Jahan, learning that this princess had a lover in her palace, forthwith went to seize him. The princess had hidden the man in a stove, and the king caused it to be lighted, and thus secured his death. I leave it to the reader to judge if a father, who loved so much this princess, would do such an infamous act to his daughter at such a great court, where there were so many ambassadors. Although he might know that his daughter had her hidden diversions, he always dissembled, holding the princess equal to her mother, of whom it might be said she governed the kingdom.

Dara wished, and petitioned his father accordingly, that the princess should be married to the chief general at the court, whose name was Nezabet Can [Nijabat Khan], a man descended from the royal family of Balq [Balkh]. He was brave and well-proportioned; but Shayista Khan, brother-in-law of Shah Jahan, becoming aware of this proposal, said to him [Shah Jahan] that it was not advisable to make such a marriage, because when married to the said princess, the husband would necessarily have to be placed in the same rank as any other prince. Nijabat Khan was related to the King of Balkh, against whom His Majesty must sometime make war.

Furthermore, he ought to bear in remembrance the regulation of Akbar that daughters should not be given husbands. This was the reason why Shah Jahan did not give his daughter in marriage, although from his fondness for her, he would have liked to find her a husband.

All the same, this princess did not desist from waiting on her father with great affection, contenting herself with the pleasure she had with her lovers. The principal one was a vigorous youth of goodly presence, the son of the chief dancer in her employ, who was her mistress of music. This person was brought to the harem when he was quite small, and he sang with such charm before the princess that she gave him the epithet of "Born in the House." Under cover of this title, these princesses and many great ladies gratify their desires. When he began to get a little bigger, she gave him the name of Dulera--that is to say, "always a bridegroom"--and he received rank like any other commander, with a number of cavalry and infantry and gorgeous standards, and his name was great in the city.

The princess treated herself to many entertainments, such as music, dancing and other pastimes. It happened one night, while engaged in such-like dances, that the thin raiment steeped in perfumed oils of the princess's favorite dancing-woman caught fire, and from the great love she bore to her, the princess came to her aid, and thus was burnt herself on the chest. From this arose great disturbance at the court, but what caused the greatest sorrow to the princess was that the dancing-woman died. In addition to these amusements, the princess was also fond of drinking wine, which was imported for her from Persia, Kabul, and Kashmir. But the best liquor she drank was distilled in her own house. It was a most delicious spirit, made from wine and rosewater, flavored with many costly spices and aromatic drugs. Many a time, she did me the favor of ordering some bottles of it to be sent to my house, in sign of her gratitude for my curing people in her harem. The liquor profited me greatly. The lady's drinking was at night, when various delightful pranks, music, dancing, and acting were going on around her. Things arrived at such a pass that sometimes she was unable to stand, and they had to carry her to bed.

I say this because I was admitted on familiar terms to this house, and I was deep in the confidence of the principal ladies and eunuchs in her service. I have no wish to state all that went on. But I am very surprised at what Monsieur Bernier has written--namely, that the *nazir*, or chief eunuch, of the princess would not allow any desired person to enter the palace of the princess, and for this reason she caused the *nazir* to be put to death by poison. On the contrary, the man obeyed her, and sought every mode of gratifying her, seeing the great interest he had not to work against her.

When Begam Sahib leaves her palace to go to court, she proceeds in great pomp, with much cavalry and infantry and many eunuchs. The last named, who surround her closely, push on one side everyone they find in front of them, shouting out, pushing and assaulting everyone without the least respect of persons. The same is done by all the princesses of the blood-royal when they come out . . . . Among all these ladies, the most esteemed and respected was Begam Sahib, because she obtained from her father whatever she asked.

*Confinement of Shah Jahan*

40.10. MUNDY

**[V, p. 97]** About the middle of [June 1658] was heard of . . . the death of Shah Jehan, the Great Mogoll or King of India (att Agra), who seeking by artificiall meanes to stirre up lust, which was naturally decaying in him, beeing 73 years of age, wrought his owne death. Hee raigned aboutt 32 years, having often seene him at my beeing at Agra. Out of the newes booke.

**[p. 107]** . . . This summer wee had newes from East India that Shah Jehan, the Great Mogoll, whome I often saw, was not dead, as was reported the last year, butt kept in prison by his sonnes, his eies being put out. Allso of the losse of sundry East Indian shipps.

40.11. CARERI

**[p. 222]** When Scia-gehan had Reign'd forty Years, more like a Father than a King, being at the Age of seventy Years, fitter for any thing than Love; he became desperately Amorous of a Moorish young Woman. His unruly Passion prevailing, he gave himself up so entirely to her, beyond what became his Age, that being reduc'd to extream Weakness, and despairing of his Recovery, he shut himself up for three Months in the Aram, without shewing himself to the People, according to Custom.

40.12. TAVERNIER

**[I, pp. 272-74]** After Dara Shikoh had lost the battle against his two brothers Aurangzeb and Murad Bakhsh, in the plain of Samonguir [Samugarh], and was basely deserted by the principal officers of his army, he retired to the Kingdom of Lahore with as much of the royal treasure as he had been able to take in the confusion of his affairs. The Emperor, in the hope of resisting the impetuosity of his victorious sons, whose only thoughts were of reigning by depriving him of his throne, and possibly of his life, shut himself up in the fortress of Agra to avoid arrest, and to see what limits his sons would carry their insolence. . . . .

The Prince [Aurangzeb] feared, with good reason too, that if he entered except as master, he might be served an evil turn and his person seized, and the Emperor when he knew his resolution, not being able to do any better, consented to all that his son demanded. Accordingly, the garrison of Shah Jahan went out of the fortress, and that of Aurangzeb entered under command of Sultan Muhammad, the eldest of his sons, to whom he gave a command to secure the person of the Emperor his father.

He also caused the Begam Sahib, his sister, to be confined in the fortress, that she might keep company with the King, whom she dearly loved. And he also took possession of all the wealth which she had received from her father's liberality.

Shah Jahan, incensed at being treated in this manner by his own son, made some effort to escape, and slew some of the guards who dared to oppose him; this caused Aurangzeb to order him into closer confinement. . . .

**[p. 295]** Some days previously Aurangzeb boldly sent to present his compliments to his father, Shahjahan, which he well knew would be displeasing to him. He begged him, as he was about to ascend the throne in a few days, to have the kindness to send

some of his jewels to be used on that day, so that he might appear before his people with the same magnificence as the other Emperors, his predecessors, had done. Shahjahan became so enraged at this demand of Aurangzeb, which he regarded as an insult levelled at him in his prison by his son, that for some days he was like a madman, and he even nearly died. In the excess of his passion he frequently called for a pestle and mortar, saying that he would pound up all his precious stones and pearls, so that Aurangzeb might never possess them. But the Begam Sahib, his eldest daughter, who had never left him, threw herself at his feet, and besought him not to proceed to such an extremity, and as she had full power over him in consequence of the intimate relations which existed between them, she appeased him, rather with the object of keeping the precious stones for herself than to give pleasure to her brother, her mortal enemy who might one day become their possessor.

40.13. BERNIER

**[p. 166]** Although Aureng-Zebe kept his father closely confined in the fortress of Agra and neglected no precaution to prevent his escape, yet the deposed monarch was otherwise treated with indulgence and respect. He was permitted to occupy his former apartments, and to enjoy the society of Begum-Saheb and the whole of his female establishment, including the singing and dancing women, cooks, and others. In these respects no request was ever denied him; and as the old man became wondrously devout, certain Mullahs were allowed to enter his apartment and read the Koran.

*Death of Shah Jahan*

40.14. TAVERNIER

**[I, pp. 274-76]** Thus this great Emperor ended his days sadly in prison, and died in the Agra fort about the end [sic] of the year 1666, during my last journey in India.

During his reign, he had commenced building of the city of Jahanabad, which was not yet completed, and he wished to see it once more before he died. But for this purpose, it was necessary to obtain the consent of Aurangzeb, his son, who held him prisoner, and he was quite willing to allow him to make the journey, and even to remain at Jahanabad as long as he wished, shut up in the castle, as he was in Agra, provided that he travel up the river by boat, and return in one of the small painted and ornamented frigates which lie on the Jumna at the palace of Jahanabad. And Aurangzeb was unwilling to permit him to travel on his elephant by land, as he feared lest his father's appearance to the people might immediately raise a party in his favor, and that if he placed himself at their head, as people are inconstant, he might find means to recover the throne. Shah Jahan, perceiving the severity of his son, who wished to injure him in this way, gave up the idea of the journey, and the great displeasure he felt at such cruel treatment hastened his death.

As soon as Aurangzeb had news of [Shah Jahan's death], he came to Agra and seized all the jewels of the late King, his father, which he had not secured during his life. The Begam Sahib also had a quantity of precious stones, which he had not taken

from her when he placed her in the fortress, as he was then satisfied with securing her chests full of gold and silver.

These jewels confirmed Aurangzeb's suspicions, the Princess, his sister, having already been suspected of having had improper relations with Shah Jahan, and he found means to obtain them in a manner which appeared honest and reasonable, by treating the Begam Sahib with much honor and attention; but he removed her to Jahanabad, and I saw the elephant pass upon which she was mounted when she left Agra with the court as I was entering it on my return from Bengal. In a short time after, news was spread of the death of this Princess, and all the world believed it had been hastened by poison.

### 40.15. MANUCCI

**[II, pp. 117-17]** While Rajah Jai Singh was halted in Brampur (Burhanpur) awaiting the army which was following us, he received the news of Shahjahan's death, which happened in the following manner. Noromgabadi (Aurangabadi), wife of Shahjahan, had two lovely maid-servants, one Aftab, which means 'Sun,' and the other Mahtab--that is to say, 'Moon.' Finding that Shahjahan was attracted by them, she gave them to him for his amusement.

One day Shahjahan was in front of a mirror adjusting his moustaches, and these two women were standing behind him. One made a sign to the other, as if mocking the old man who wanted to get himself up as a youth. Shahjahan saw the gesture, and, touched in his reputation, had recourse to drugs to maintain his strength in his accustomed vices. By these his bladder was so weakened that a retention of urine came on. For this no remedy could be found, he being now an old man and much enfeebled. At the same time, he brought to mind what the faqir with the two apples had said. This was when he was Prince Corrum [Khurram], and was at Juner, in Bijapur territory, and it was to the effect that when his death approached he would lose the smell of apples on his hands. Recognising that this had come true, he lost heart about his living longer, and thus came to an end in a short time.

When I'tibar Khan sent the report to court, Aurangzeb called to mind the subterfuges by which Shahjahan, being then Sultan Khurram, gave out that he was dead, and thereby gained the throne. Might he not have sought a similar method of getting out of prison and recovering the kingdom? Aurangzeb therefore sent a trusty man to pass a heated iron rod over his father's feet, and if the body did not stir, then to pierce the skull down to the throat, to make quite certain that he was really dead. Orders were sent to I'tibar Khan not to allow his burial until the arrival of Aurangzeb in person. He journeyed quickly by river, for it was of great importance to him to be delivered of this uneasiness, and he cloaked his ill-will under the shadow of filial piety, in the hope that the populace would cease to whisper.

Arrived at Agrah, Aurangzeb put up at the mausoleum of Taj Mahal, and there awaited his father's body. It was not carried out through the palace entrance; through a hole made in the wall they brought it out head first, this being a superstition among the Mogul kings, I know not the reason why. Begam Sahib sent two thousand gold coins to be given to the poor, but the guards seized the whole, saying that prisoners could not give away anything. On the arrival of the corpse at the tomb, Aurangzeb prayed and showed much devoutness, wiping his eyes as if he wept.

Thus he found himself arrived at the object of his desires in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-five [correctly, 1666], that father being now buried whose death he had so long desired, and to shorten whose life he had sought so many expedients.

At the conclusion of the ceremony Aurangzeb went into the fort, when Begam Sahib came out to meet him. After the usual obeisances she presented to him the letter of pardon that, as she said, she had obtained from Shahjahan, her father, together with the valuable and ancient jewels remaining under his control.

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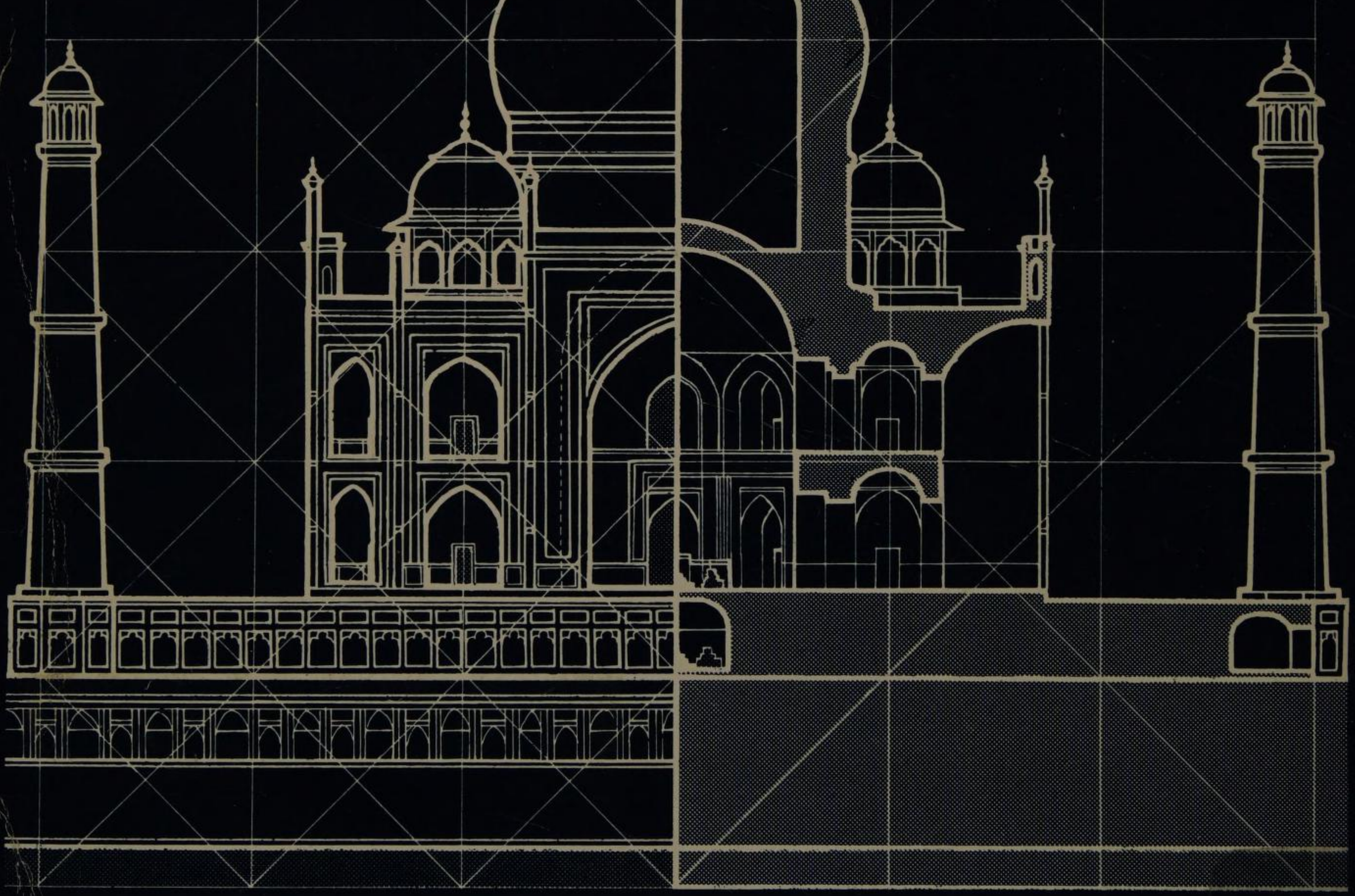

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